

ITALIAN TEXTS IN HEBREW CHARACTERS
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO THEIR LANGUAGE

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TO THEIR LANGUAGE

BY

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SUMMARY

The Jews in Italy in the Middle Ages, apart from using the usual literary languages, produced a number of texts in Italian written in Hebrew characters. The language of many of these, however, is not literary Italian and this thesis is concerned with examining the nature of their language.

Previous studies in this field are discussed (cap. I) and the most widely accepted solution to the problem is shown to be that the language of the texts is a Judaeo-Italian dialect or koine. However, it is suggested that the consequences of the use of the Hebrew alphabet and the relation of the language of the texts to the linguistic situation in Italy have been insufficiently examined.

In order to see these texts in proper perspective, their purpose and the circumstances in which they were written are discussed (cap. II), with particular emphasis on the reasons for the use of Hebrew characters. But in order to interpret the language of the texts correctly, the transcription system must be fully understood; and in order to elucidate this, the values of the Hebrew signs must be determined. Hence the pronunciation of Hebrew in Italy is examined (cap. III), and the systems of transcription of a number of Judaeo-Italian texts are discussed on a comparative basis (cap. IV). In the final chapter, these findings are utilised in examining a group of representative texts whose linguistic affinities are shown to be attributable not to the existence of a common Jewish dialect, but to a common written source. Two of the MSS. are shown to have been written, in fact, by the same scribe.

The processes whereby these texts have come to assume their present linguistic physiognomy are illustrated, with special attention given to the effects of the use of Hebrew characters on the copying process. The texts and their language are thus shown to be the result of a literary convention in a particular tradition, rather than a record of a spoken Jewish dialect.

The linguistic peculiarities of other texts, especially those which have recently been proposed as examples of Judaeo-Italian dialect or koine, are shown to be attributable to a variety of causes.

In the course of examining this principal problem, solutions are proposed to other problems, such as the dating of certain texts and the origin of the most perplexing lexical anomaly of their language.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- A G I Archivio Glottologico Italiano, Turin, 1873- .
- Arch. Rom. Archivum Romanicum, Geneva-Florence, 1917-41.
- A S E Annuario di Studi Ebraici, Rome, 1934- .
- Bibl. La Bibliofilia, Florence, 1899-
- Boll. Sic. Bollettino del Centro di Studi Filologici e Linguistici Siciliani, Palermo, 1953- .
- D E I C. Battisti-G. Alessio, Dizionario etimologico italiano, Florence, 1950-57.
- G S L I Giornale storico della letteratura italiana, Turin, 1883- .
- H U C A Hebrew Union College Annual, Cincinnati, 1926- .
- I D L'Italia dialettale, Pisa, 1925- .
- Jew. Enc. The Jewish Encyclopedia, New York-London, 1925.
- J Q R The Jewish Quarterly Review, London, 1889-1908; Philadelphia, 1910- .
- M G W J Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums, Leipzig-Breslau, 1852-1938.
- Mod. Phil. Modern Philology, Chicago, 1903- .
- R E J Revue des études juives, Paris, 1880- .
- Riv. Is. Rivista Israelitica, Florence, 1904-
- R M I La Rassegna mensile di Israel, Florence-Rome, 1925-38, 1948- .
- Rom. Romania, Paris, 1872- .
- Rom. Phil. Romance Philology, Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1948- .
- Rom. Stud. Romanische Studien, hgg. E. Boehmer, Strasbourg, 1875-95.
- St. Rom. Studj romanzi, Rome, 1903- .
- Ves. Is. Il Vessillo Israelitico, Casale Monferrato-Cuneo, 1874-1922.
- Z H B Zeitschrift für Hebräische Bibliographie, Frankfurt, 1896-
- Z R Ph Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, Halle, 1877- .

SPECIAL SYMBOLS

In addition to the usual symbols, the following signs have been given a special value:-

ć as in Italian cena

ġ as in Italian gelo

ś as in Italian scena

s as in Italian sale

ŝ as in Italian svago

z as in Italian pazzo

ž as in Italian mezzo

l' as in Italian figlio

* indicates a schematic Hebrew consonant

In Italy, during the Middle Ages, Jewish writers produced works in three major literary languages, Hebrew, Latin and Italian.¹ However, a number of texts of a hybrid nature are known, using the Hebrew alphabet but the Italian language. These "Judaean-Italian" texts contain works of varied character, and many of them are fragmentary. They are rarely original compositions, consisting mainly of translations or aids to translation from Hebrew, including Bible translations, translations of various liturgical works (notably the daily prayers) and Hebrew-Italian glossaries. The most notable original literary compositions are poems of a liturgical character; similar poems are known in other Romance languages.²

No thorough survey of Judaean-Italian texts has ever been attempted.³ However, such evidence as we have, suggests that the majority have little literary interest, although some have considerable interest for the history of the Bible in Italy (an aspect which has been explored by several scholars). But perhaps their principal claim to our attention is linguistic, for many are couched in a language which is clearly not literary Italian.

This thesis is aimed at elucidating interpretative problems of a linguistic nature inherent in Italian texts written in Hebrew characters, and is based on a study of certain texts listed at the end of this Introduction.

Judaean-Italian texts are by no means unexplored territory; hence Chapter I is a descriptive bibliography of published work on the texts and on the language of the Jews in Italy, together with an attempt to trace what is inadequate in the picture presented by these studies, and to indicate what

needs to be examined more closely. In particular, scholars have tended to overlook the lessons to be learned from an examination of the manner in which Hebrew characters have been used for writing Italian. It is important to examine the texts as they actually appear in their Hebrew garb; the linguistic picture may well be falsified and much valuable evidence overlooked if the examination is based not on the original texts but on an edited version in the Latin alphabet. Hence particular attention has been paid in this thesis to the original Hebrew texts and their systems of transcription.⁴

Chapter II examines the reasons why the Hebrew alphabet was used and the circumstances in which the translations were made.

In Chapter III, the pronunciation of Hebrew in Italy is examined in detail, firstly because a knowledge of the phonetic values usually attributed to the Hebrew signs is a prerequisite for discussing and transcribing the language of these texts; and secondly, because of the absence of any suitable study of the kind (except for the works of limited scope mentioned in Chapter III itself).

In Chapter IV, the systems of transcription of fourteen Judaeo-Italian texts are examined on a comparative basis; for, although the systems of transcription of individual texts have been sketched out in previous studies, little attempt has been made to compare these with systems of other texts. A MS. using a fairly complete and complex system is examined in detail as a basis for comparison with the other thirteen texts, the results being presented in the form of a table. The relative affinities of the systems of transcription are then outlined, and some of the salient

features of the table discussed.

Chapter V is primarily devoted to an examination of six MSS. containing translations of the Siddur. This is aimed principally at determining whether their linguistic characteristics may be attributed to the use of a dialect peculiar to the Jews. The language of other texts is discussed in relation to these findings; and in the course of the enquiry certain interpretative problems of lesser moment are considered.

A note on terminology

Some of the terms used in this field are highly ambiguous. The following definitions of how they are used here will prevent misunderstanding. "Judaeo-Italian text" is used of any text written in Hebrew characters whose language is any type of Italian (literary, dialectal, etc.). On the other hand, "Judaeo-Italian dialect" has generally been used in the past to imply an Italian dialect peculiar to the Jews, by analogy with Judaeo-German, Judaeo-Spanish, etc., and I have used it here only with that connotation, and not to describe simply an Italian dialect written in Hebrew characters. I have used "system of transcription" as the most convenient term for the mode of writing of Italian in Hebrew characters; this should not be taken to imply transcription from one alphabet into another. In order to make it quite clear what language and alphabet I am referring to, I have sometimes used the term "normal Hebrew", to indicate the Hebrew language written in Hebrew characters, "normal Italian" to indicate the Italian language written in Latin characters, etc.

Texts

Certain texts are referred to with the following letters (a more de-

tailed description of them will be found in the catalogues and studies cited in the notes):

- A = B.M., Or. 74, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), Italian square characters, pointed, 15th cent.⁵

- B. = B.M., Or. 2443, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), Italian rabbinic characters, pointed, dated 1383 [should be 1483], written at Montalboddo [= Ostra, prov. di Ancona] for a lady named Ribka by Israel b. Eliezer.⁶

- C. = B.M., Or. 9626, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), Italian rabbinic characters, pointed, illuminated initials, 16th cent. [Margoliouth], 15th cent., perhaps late 14th cent. [Cassuto].⁷

- D = Paris, Bibl. Nat., Cod. Hébr. 1342, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), Italian rabbinic characters, pointed, illuminated, 15th cent.⁸

- E = Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS. no. 1989, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), Italian rabbinic characters, pointed, illuminated, dated 1484, written [in Florence?] for the daughter of Isaac b. Emmanuel da S. Miniato by Shemaria b. Abraham Jehiel.⁹

- F = Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS. no. 2147, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), Italian rabbinic characters, pointed, dated 1499, written at Cento [Emilia].¹⁰

- G = Siddur de tutto l'anno, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), printed at Fano in 1505 by Gherson Soncino, prepared by Jacob Israel.¹¹

- H = Tefilloth Latine, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite), printed at Bologna in 1538.¹²

- J = Tefilloth Vulgar, translation of the Siddur (Italian rite),

printed at Mantua in 1561, prepared by Jacob b. Naftali ha-Kohen di Gazzuolo.¹³

- K = Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS no. 3068, translation of part of the minor Prophets (Jer. 3, 28 - end of Malachi), "carattere quadrato con tendenza al corsivo", pointed, on paper, 15th or early 16th cent.¹⁴
- L = Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS. no. 2506, parts of the Hagiographa and of the Pentateuch, Italian cursive characters, mainly unpointed, on paper, late 15th or early 16th cent.¹⁵
- N = A translation of the Mishna tractate, Pirké Aboth ["The Ethics of or the Fathers"] with the Hebrew text, printed in Venice in 1615.¹⁶
- O = Elegy for 9th Ab of late 12th or early 13th cent. (pointed text as reproduced by Cassuto in Un'antichissima elegia in dialetto giudeo-italiano, pp. 391 - 402.¹⁷) Occurs in an otherwise normal Hebrew, 14th cent. Machzor (ff. 232a - 233b), at one time in the Synagogue of Ferrara.
- P = Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS. no. 2736, first half ^{of} a Machzor, Italian rabbinic characters, pointed, 14th cent. On ff. 165b - 167a occurs the same poem as in O, but unpointed except for a few words.¹⁸
- R = Leyden, Biblioth^hek der Rijksuniversiteit, Cod. Or. 4727 (= Scaliger X, 1 ?). A treatise on Aristotelian philosophy by Mosé da Rieti, Italian cursive characters, 15th cent.¹⁹

Notes to the Introduction

1. For works on the history and culture of the Jews in mediaeval Italy, see: A.Milano, Bibliotheca historica italo-judaica, Florence, 1954, and idem, Supplemento 1954 - 1963, Florence, 1964.
2. See: Romanica et Occidentalia, ed. M. Lazar, Jerusalem, 1963, p. 291.
3. M. Steinschneider's series of articles on the Italian literature of the Jews, for reasons which will be elaborated below, hardly fills this need. It is, in any case, rather a bibliography than a literary history. A clearer idea of the range of the texts may be obtained from the list given by C. Roth in R E J, LXXX (1925) pp. 63-65. Cassuto gives a more complete and accurate list (but only of Biblical texts) in Bibliografia delle traduzioni giudeo-italiane della Bibbia in Festschrift...A.Kaminka, Vienna, 1937, pp. 129-141; and he gives a very brief survey, "La letteratura giudeo-italiana", in A G I, XXII-XXIII (1929) pp. 371-6. (These works are discussed in cap. I, below.)
4. For the way this expression is used here, see the "Note on terminology" in this Introduction (p.3).
5. See: G. Margoliouth, Cat. of the Heb. and Samaritan MSS. in the B.M., London, 1899-1935 (4 vols.), vol. II, p. 217a (no. 624); U.Cassuto, Bibliografia..., cit., p. 140 (no.44); idem, Les traductions judéo-italiennes du Rituel in R E J, LXXXIX (1930) p. 271.
6. See: Margoliouth, op.cit., vol. II, p. 217b (no. 625) and vol. IV, p.191a (important note on dating); Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 139 (no.40); idem, Les traductions, p. 265.
7. See: Margoliouth, op.cit., vol. IV, p. 159a; Cassuto, Bibliografia,

p. 140 (no. 45); idem, Les traductions, p. 271; F. Soave, Dei Soncino, celebri tipographi, etc., Venice, 1878, p. 30. On the dating (probably the 1470s) see cap. V, p. 164, below.

8. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 140 (no. 43); idem, Les traductions, p. 270; M. Schwab in R E J, XXXVII (1898) p. 130.

9. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 140 (no. 41); idem, Les traductions, p. 267; G-B. De Rossi, Manuscripti codices hebraici, Parma, 1803, under "Ital. 7".

10. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 140 (no. 42); idem, Les traductions, p. 269; De Rossi, op.cit., under "Ital. 6".

11. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 140 (no. 49); idem, Les traductions, p. 272; M. Steinschneider, Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana, Berlin, 1931 (3 vols.), col. 364, no. 2435.

12. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 140 (no. 50); idem, Les traductions, p. 272; Steinschneider, op.cit., col. 364, no. 2436; J. Zedner, Cat. of Heb. Printed Books in the B.M., London, 1867, p. 483; a page is reproduced in Jew. Enc., vol. III, p. 299.

13. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 140 (no. 52); idem, Les traductions, p. 273; Steinschneider, op. cit., col. 364, no. 2437; Zedner, op. cit., p. 483; colophon reproduced in Jew. Enc., vol. IV, p. 172.

14. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 138 (no. 25); idem, Il libro di Amos in traduzione giudeo-italiana in Miscellanea... H.P. Chajes, Florence, 1930, pp. 19-38; De Rossi, op.cit., under "Ital. 1"; D. Camerini, Une ancienne version italienne des Prophètes in R E J, LXXII (1921) pp. 29 - 39.

15. See: Cassuto, Bibliografia, p. 138 (no. 26); De Rossi, op.cit., under "Ital. 2".

16. See: A.E. Cowley, A Concise Cat. of Heb. Printed Books in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1929, p. 446.

17. in A G I, XXII-XXIII (1929) pp. 349-408; Cassuto gives a full description of this text on pp. 350-1. I have been unable to trace this MS. and have therefore used Cassuto's reproduction, which is probably extremely accurate (note the careful corrections on p. 391). Text O in this thesis = Cassuto's text F.

18. See: the article cited in the previous note (pp. 352-3); De Rossi, op. cit., vol. II, p. 180 (no. 804).

19. M. Steinschneider, Catalogus codicum hebraeorum Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae, Leyden, 1858, under "Cod. S. X. 1."

CHAPTER I

The Study of Judæo-Italian Texts and of the
Language of the Jews in Italy

In the studies published from the early nineteenth century to the present day, it is difficult to trace a coherent development, for in a field in which many texts have never really been explored, there has been little attempt to follow up theories already proposed, or to examine texts in the light of general problems. However, after the following bibliographical outline, an attempt will be made to gather together some of the threads and to pick out the principal lines of thought.

During the nineteenth century, texts of an earlier age, using the Hebrew alphabet but written in Romance languages, were discovered and studied, the mediaeval French texts being particularly notable. Italian texts also received attention, although in much less detail; and it was not until the twentieth century that the linguistic problems presented by these texts were studied. Most of the texts remain unpublished and there are some not even listed in any bibliography.

The first mention, in modern times, of Italian texts in Hebrew characters occurs in A. Cologna's introduction to S.D. Luzzatto's Italian translation of the Daily Prayer Book, published in Vienna in 1829.¹ He makes an interesting reference to the language of the ancient translations: "Sembra essere una mescolanza di vocaboli semi-latini, spagnuoli e siciliani, e di qualche verbo tolto dall'ebraico, cui si dà l'inflessione italiana".²

However, Luzzatto himself, author of several notable Bible translations

from Hebrew into modern Italian, reveals a rather more accurate insight into the nature of the Italian texts in Hebrew characters.³ He corrects Steinschneider's interpretation of לללללל as laudiamo, pointing out that it is really a dialect form (which he calls "pronuncia napoletana") for laudando.⁴ His further observations that this form is "frequente nell'italiano vecchio giudaico" reveals a knowledge of at least one feature of the texts which unfortunately he did not utilise for any subsequent publications.

G.I. Ascoli, whose great philological talents might have done a great deal to elucidate problems inherent in the Judaeo-Italian texts, was another scholar who evidently had at this time some insight into the question of Jewish dialect in Italy, which he too, however, never pursued. On several occasions, over a period of approximately thirty years, he mentions Judaeo-Italian speech, or corrects mistaken interpretations of other scholars, without ever studying the subject at length. Such a note occurs in his Studi Orientali e linguistici⁵ where he considers certain Hebrew terms occurring in the vernacular of Piedmontese Jews as the source of some thieves' cant words such as tarer and tarüs.

In the early 70's, A. Neubauer⁶ and particularly A. Darmesteter⁷ were exploring and publishing, with consummate skill, mediaeval Judaeo-French glossaries of considerable importance; and the transcription of Old French in Hebrew characters was examined at length as early as 1875 by E. Boehmer.⁸ But Judaeo-Italian texts and transcription were somewhat neglected, particularly by Italians, and it was left to German and French scholars such as Steinschneider and Schwab to examine the Italian texts -

with a perhaps understandable neglect of linguistic questions.

In 1871, however, M. Steinschneider published the first of his series of articles on the Italian literature of the Jews, and these continued at intervals until 1880.⁹ Although these articles are wide in range and full of information, their value is severely limited by the author's style and methods. He gives the reader the full benefit of his vast erudition and brings in anything which is remotely connected with the subject. The first article opens rather surprisingly, with a page of discussion on the origins of the term "ghetto". The author then goes on to discuss at length the names of the Jews of Italy and the etymology of these. At the end of the first article he promises to get to the point in the next. However, he does not really begin to describe the literature of the Italian Jews until well into the first series. For a bibliographer he can be strangely inaccurate as when he defines the language of a work as Italian (in Hebrew characters) when in fact it is in Spanish.¹⁰ And clarity is certainly not his strong point. He gives very little attention to the cardinal question of the language the works are written in, although these include Latin and Hebrew works written in Italy (some by Italian Jews and some by Jews from other countries), works written in literary Italian in Latin characters and in Hebrew characters, and works written in Italian dialect and Hebrew characters, etc. But Steinschneider rarely makes it clear what language a work is written in, even in the case of translations into Latin or Hebrew. Thus this pioneering series of articles (for such it certainly is) is a disappointment, especially as the author rarely discusses the contents or characteristics of the works listed, being more concerned with the historical

circumstances of the writer; and his bibliographical information is wrapped up in all kinds of cryptic references and allusions (he does not usually quote the date and place of publication of books or give a key to the abbreviations he uses). What, for instance, is "Virchow's Archiv"?

When he occasionally quotes details of a text this can be equally disconcerting, e.g. he quotes קוילראונטי אוכיאת בונאטי as "quello che conti ogna bon'alle"¹¹ I feel that here someone else's reactions to another work of Steinschneider's may make this rather uncharitable judgment of his work on Judaeo-Italian texts more comprehensible.

The late Bodley's Librarian justly calls Steinschneider's gargantuan catalogue of the Bodleian Hebrew collection of printed books¹² (on which he laboured for thirteen years) "that great work", but makes it clear that he himself has been forced to produce a new catalogue, not only because Steinschneider's work is out of date, but also because:

"it deals not only with Hebrew books but also with a number of Jewish books which are in no sense Hebrew, many of the books described have never been in the Bodleian Library, and some books which were and are in the library have been over-looked. Moreover it is written in Latin which is often difficult to understand, it gives no shelf-marks..." etc.¹³

Certainly, despite these serious faults, Steinschneider has the merit of being a pioneer in the study of Judaeo-Italian texts and has unearthed and given invaluable bibliographical information about some MSS. which were previously unknown. The only surveys of such a comprehensive kind since attempted are the much briefer bibliography of Italian Biblical translations by Cassuto¹⁴ and the bibliography appended by C. Roth

to his edition of the sixteenth century sabbath hymn by Mordechai Dato.¹⁵

It was not until 1887 that Italian translations of the Prayer Book, mentioned by Cologna and Luzzatto sixty years earlier, were considered in some detail by L. Modona;¹⁶ and a further succinct article followed in 1890 in which he describes a printed Judaeo-Italian prayer-book.¹⁷ Here he takes the opportunity to describe the mediaeval Judaeo-Italian texts and points out that these demonstrate the use of Italian vernacular by the Jews in their Biblical studies, as proved especially by the glossaries, which he wisely designates "ebreo-dialettali". M. Güdemann mentions having seen fragments of mediaeval Judaeo-Italian translations of the Bible in his Geschichte des Erziehungs^gwesens und der Kultur der_k Juden in Italien, published in Vienna in 1884.¹⁸

The next close examination of a Judaeo-Italian text, this time a dictionary (first published in 1488, probably in Naples), was a series of articles by M. Schwab¹⁹ containing the Hebrew and Italian parallel columns of a Hebrew-Arabic-Italian glossary known as the Magré Dardeqé in which the Italian glosses for the Hebrew words are written in Hebrew characters. The modern editor, M. Schwab, gives the Hebrew text of each word followed by a transcription in the Latin alphabet. Unfortunately, he apparently starts from the presupposition that the second column represents a form of ancient literary Italian and that the Hebrew transliteration was only a vague approximation to the actual sounds intended. Hence, using the Hebrew and Arabic words as a guide to the meaning and the transliteration as a guide to the form of the word, he produces a

solution which very often is quite obviously not the sound intended in the original. It is rather surprising that this French scholar, Librarian of the Bibliothèque Nationale, should have learned so little from Darmesteter's painstaking and accurate deciphering of French texts. Even a cursory examination of the latter's transcriptions (or even the Neubauer-Boehmer transcriptions) shows the care taken to start from the written Hebrew text, and strive to discover what it represents, whereas a cursory examination of Schwab's text reveals a constant omission of "incorrect" letters and an insertion of others of which there is no trace in the Hebrew text. Schwab's fundamental error in method was seen immediately by Ascoli, who in a published letter²⁰ points out that the apparent errors in the text can be better interpreted as southern dialect traits: "non c'è nulla da correggere in **אמבידיאה**²¹ che rappresenta un'importante fase dialettale..." etc. Ascoli, while pointing out that, apparently unknown to Schwab, there is also a copy of the Magré Dardegé in the Ambrosiana in Milan, says "com'ella vedrà da una mia prossima pubblicazione". Unfortunately, however, he does not seem to have pursued the matter, and the promised publication never materialised. Ascoli's preliminary remarks - aptly characterising the language of the Magré Dardegé as containing "strati diversi; ma con predominio dell'elemento meridionale" - make it even more regrettable that he did not turn his attention further to the question of Judaeo-Italian language and texts.

Apart from studies on the translations of the Prayer Book and on the Glossaries, and vague references to Bible translations, some interesting

and somewhat unexpected works were brought to light, e.g. Maimonides's great philosophical work the Moreh Nebukhim or Erudizione de' Confusi,²² in a sixteenth century Italian translation in Hebrew characters, was described by Sacerdote.²³ He examines the fortunes of the Latin and Italian translations of this work, identifies the author of the translations as Jedidiah da Rimini and discusses the method, purpose and quality (mediocre) of the translation. In a brier bibliography²⁴ he points to other Italian texts in Hebrew characters to be found in Italian libraries. He also sketches the system of transcription²⁵ but his view that this is the system used in all Italian texts in Hebrew characters is an over-simplification.

In the following year, Sacerdote drew the attention of philologists to the survival, after the destruction of the ghettos, of certain regional Judaeo-Italian speech forms, in an article entitled Di alcune voci dialettali e corrotte fra gli israeliti piemontese,²⁶ whose title is self-explanatory. This, however, seems to have aroused little interest or sense of urgency in dealing with linguistic phenomena which were fast disappearing.²⁷

A similar attitude was expressed at the time by L. Modona, in a further article, not concerned this time with the Prayer Book, but with Judaeo-Italian speech in modern times: Intorno ad un possibile lavoro filologico sui dialetti parlati già dagli Ebrei in Italia.²⁸

From 1898 to 1900, M. Steinschneider continued his series of articles, this time in German, on Die italienische Literatur der Juden²⁹ and these

contain the first significant attempt to gather together the known bibliographical details of the mediaeval Italian translations of the Bible.³⁰

The Vessillo Israelitico at this time began to elicit contributions to the knowledge of modern Jewish speech in the various regions of Italy, on the lines of the studies of Modona and Sacerdote. This produced lists of non-Italian or dialectal expressions (mostly derived from Hebrew) which were usually considered by the contributors to be antiquated if not obsolete.³¹ One of these articles³² was contributed by a scholar who was to devote very fruitfully a considerable amount of his energies to the Jewish speech of Italy, to the mediaeval Bible translations and to Judaeo-Italian texts, Umberto Cassuto.

Almost as though it were the swan-song of these peculiar forms of speech, at the beginning of the century appeared a work written by a scholar who was intimately acquainted with the Jewish speech, this time of Rome, and whose intention was to enshrine this moribund form of expression in verse which would, at the same time, convey something of what had been the life of the Roman ghetto before its dissolution in the nineteenth century. These Sonetti giudaico-romaneschi by Crescenzo Del Monte³³ are an invaluable document of a form of speech which otherwise might never have been recorded.

In an article on a sixteenth century account book, kept in Hebrew by Paduan Jews between 1549 and 1554,³⁴ U. Cassuto discovered Italian words and expressions of interest, and carefully examined the system of transcription in a manner which is quite the antithesis of Schwab's;³⁵

and in another article on a similar document,³⁶ this time, however, the product of Florentine bankers in 1477, Cassuto tackles some subtle problems of interpretation of the system of transcription, which are of considerable value for the interpretation of other Judaeo-Italian texts.

In 1913, the text was discovered of what is the most outstanding Judaeo-Italian work from the literary point of view, - and it is apparently not a translation. This Judaeo-Italian Elegy was published, with little attempt at interpretation, by E.S. Artom in the consonantal text alone, for he maintained that, as far as the vowels are concerned, the text is "spesso errante".³⁷ (It was not until 1929, following the discovery of other manuscripts of the poem, that a critical edition of the full text was published.³⁸)

The mediaeval Italian translations of the Bible appeared again in an article by D. Camerini in which he examines the text in some detail and gives extracts and a list of interesting terms occurring in the text.³⁹

S. Savini also tried to draw greater attention to the Jewish mediaeval Bible translations in an article which he produced as a result of his researches into the whole history of Italian translations of the Bible, (Christian and otherwise). The title of the article conveys his general approach: Un ignoto episodio della storia della diffusione della Bibbia in Italia.⁴⁰

A work by D.S. Blondheim of wider scope, dealing not only with Judaeo-Italian but with Romance languages in general used by the Jews, appeared in 1923.⁴¹ The author was concerned to show, apart from his thesis of the Jewish origin of the Vetus Latina, that there was a common

fund of Judaeo-Latin vocabulary at the basis of Judaeo-French, Judaeo-Italian, etc. He analyses one hundred and forty-four words recurring in cognate form in the French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Provençal and Catalan texts. This would mean that many of the terms used in the Italian translation go back to a Vulgar Latin terminology exclusive to the Jews. However, many of these terms have subsequently been found in Christian contexts similar to those of the Jewish texts⁴² and others, in any case, apply only to one or two of the Romance languages dealt with. However, for certain terms examined so thoroughly by Blondheim, the case remains strong. In a review of Blondheim's book,⁴³ Cassuto produced good reasons for believing that the Vetus Latina was not written by Jews. In doing so, he seems to contradict, unwittingly, some of his own premises concerning the Judaeo-Italian translations, particularly his theories on the peculiarly literal traditional method of translation of the Bible in the Middle Ages among the Italian Jews.

A further Italian poem in Hebrew characters was published by C. Roth in 1925. This is a sabbath hymn of considerable length which contains some linguistic and cultural elements of interest. A notable feature of this article is the inclusion of the first attempt at a comprehensive Judaeo-Italian bibliography in which the author lists over forty items.⁴⁴

In 1927 Del Monte published a further collection of poems, some of which had already appeared in the 1908 collection.⁴⁵ These were well received by linguists and literary critics alike. The poems are prefaced by some brief but valuable observations on the dialect and on the pronunciation of Hebrew amongst the Jewish community of Rome.

The desire to record the fast disappearing speech forms and at the same time to utilise them for artistic composition - on similar lines, in short, to Del Monte's sonnets - prompted G. Bedarida to publish a series of works⁴⁶ in "gergo giudaico-livornese" of which the latest and most ambitious⁴⁷ includes a series of texts representing the dialect as far back as the sixteenth century and an introductory essay on the background and origins of the dialect.

Besides the dying ghetto jargon of Rome and Leghorn the Jewish speech of Piedmont now claimed the attention of Riccarao Bachi, first in an article published in 1926,⁴⁸ but more especially in a later article entitled Saggio sul gergo di origine ebraica in uso presso gli Ebrei torinesi verso la fine del secolo XIX.⁴⁹

In 1929 U. Cassuto published an article entitled Un'antichissima elegia in dialetto giudeo-italiano⁵⁰ which is perhaps the most detailed, skillful and important study of a Judaeo-Italian text. Another manuscript of the Elegy originally published in 1913⁵¹ having been brought to Cassuto's notice, he was able to prepare a critical edition which is a palaeographical triumph, leaving, as it does, only one still puzzling line and a few lacunae in a poem of one hundred and twenty lines. The accuracy of the reading from manuscripts whose elucidation is fraught with interpretative problems of every kind is remarkable, so much so that in the thirty-seven years since this first interpretation of the manuscripts only minor emendations have been suggested.⁵² The poem is now generally considered an Italian literary work of some importance, and finds a place in ^{most of} ~~all~~ the specialised anthologies of early Italian texts.⁵³ Cassuto, in the introduction to his

critical edition, apart from giving a careful description of the manuscripts, the system of transcription, the sources and the date of composition of the Elegy itself, traces a history of La Letteratura giudeo-italiana;⁵⁴ and the influence of this survey can be seen in most subsequent writings on the subject, for it proposes solutions to some of the main critical problems, especially concerning the language of the texts.

In his survey, Cassuto included only a brief account of the Bible translations, but in the same year, he published an article entitled La tradizione giudeo-italiana per la traduzione della Bibbia⁵⁵ in which he expounds his theories as to the nature and origin of the extant Bible translations in Hebrew characters. He followed this up in 1930 by another article⁵⁶ in which, besides giving a summary of the theories already traced in his previous publications, he produces a transcription of the Book of Amos, drawn from the manuscript Adler 2291 (of the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York), and shows how this originally formed part of a complete translation of the Old Testament in Hebrew characters. It is notable that Cassuto here mentions that he is engaged in preparing a comprehensive work on the translation of the Bible amongst the Italian Jews in the Middle Ages. This, no doubt, accounts for Lazzeri's remarks, (which, however, did not appear until 1942):

Lo stesso Cassuto sta preparando ora un ampio lavoro su tutte le traduzioni giudeo-italiane medievali della Bibbia, e, in collaborazione con Blondheim, un'opera su tutti i dialetti giudeo-italiani, che li classificherà e definirà scientificamente nei loro caratteri e nelle loro peculiarità.⁵⁷

This was evidently Cassuto's intention, and it is most regrettable that neither of these works ever came to fruition. In his next article on the subject⁵⁸ Cassuto simply remarks "per varie ragioni non vedo prossima

la pubblicazione di questo mio lavoro d'insieme". In this article Cassuto accompanies the Amos translation, already published in the Miscellanea Chajes by a facing translation of the same Biblical book drawn from MS, Parma 3068. Although he does not analyse these texts in any detail, Cassuto declares them to be basically the same traditional translation.

Also in 1930, Cassuto turned his attention to a further aspect of the Judaeo-Italian texts, the translations of the Prayer Book. In his two articles⁵⁹ (of which the second is an Italian translation, with some slight changes, of the first) he describes the manuscripts or translations of the Prayer Book (of which Modona had already described the printed versions) and gives samples from these to illustrate the similarities between the various translations without, however, entering into the question of any possible graphic interrelation between the manuscripts. He attributes their origin to a traditional oral translation which each writer attempts to transcribe in his own way.

A review by Blondheim in Romania surveys the situation of studies on Judaeo-Italian up to that date in the light of Cassuto's publications in particular. He has much praise for the latter but considers that he tones down the peculiarly Jewish elements, particularly in the Elegy.⁶⁰

Blondheim made a further contribution to Judaeo-Italian studies with his Notes on the Italian words in the 'Arukh Completum'.⁶¹ These were prepared simply as a list of corrections to the Italian words in G. Kohut's monumental edition of this important mediaeval dictionary by Nathan b. Jehiel. In the process, however, Blondheim touches on several

important points of textual interpretation.

A new collection of Judaeo-Roman sonnets was published by Del Monte in 1933⁶² but this did not meet with the same appreciative reception as the 1927 collection, possibly because of the changed political climate of the times.⁶³ However, it is notable particularly for the long preliminary essay⁶⁴ in which he analyses the dialect in detail, and draws attention particularly to its differences from common Romanesco. He gives sample translations of various texts into the dialect, including such works as the Storie de Troya et de Roma, the Miracole de Roma, and the fourteenth century biography of Cola di Rienzo. These translations are intended to bring out the relation of modern Judaeo-Romanesco to modern Romanesco and to Old Romanesco, in order to give weight to his theories as to the archaic character of Judaeo-Romanesco.⁶⁵

A further article by Del Monte pursued the same theme as the introduction to his Nuovi Sonetti, with the addition, however, of further material.⁶⁶

Cassuto's article Agli albori della letteratura italiana: il più antico testo poetico in dialetto giudeo-italiano,⁶⁷ is a re-working of his 1929 article in the Silloge Ascoli. Evidently the latter had as yet attracted little attention.

His article "Targum" in the Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani⁶⁸ is, perhaps surprisingly, of some interest for our subject, because Cassuto here maintains that the evolution and linguistic stratification of the Aramaic Targumim have very close parallels with the mediaeval Italian translations of the Bible.

In this same year Cassuto produced his most important bibliographical

contribution to the subject of the Judaeo-Italian texts with an article entitled Bibliografia delle traduzioni giudeo-italiane della Bibbia.⁶⁹

This gives a clear account of the background of the translations and summarizes the conclusions reached by Cassuto up to ~~that~~ date. The bibliography contains no ~~less~~ ^{fewer} than fifty-six items divided into:

1. Biblical glossaries and dictionaries of two types,
 - (a) Those devoted to a single part or book of the Bible, usually with the words arranged in the order of their occurrence in the Biblical text, and
 - (b) Hebrew-Italian Biblical dictionaries with the words arranged in alphabetical order.
2. Italian translations of parts of the Bible.
3. Italian translations of the Prayer Book, (which of course, contains a great deal of Biblical material).

The Biblical glossary known as the Maqrè Dardeqè, already examined by Schwab in 1898, received more enlightened treatment by G. Fiorentino in her Note lessicali al Maqrè Dardeqè.⁷⁰ This contains a more accurate analysis of the language and a detailed discussion of over fifty words, for the most part not attested elsewhere. Besides these detailed lexical notes, only a brief introduction to the whole work is given as the authoress states: "mi riservo di pubblicare presto uno studio che sia un'ampia valutazione storica del Maqrè Dardeqè". But these were difficult years, and it was not until 1951 that her article, due to be published in 1939, appeared in an English translation.⁷¹ In this she draws on the evidence of the Maqrè Dardeqè to oppose the theories of Blondheim on the Jewish authorship of the Vetus Latina, and to modify Cassuto's theories on the

development of Judaeo-Italian literature and dialect.

In 1938, B. Terracini contributed an article on the Jewish speech of Piedmont in the nineteenth century.⁷² In this he points out the difficulty of finding oral testimony of these fast disappearing speech forms and describes a certain limited literary production in Judaeo-Piedmontese, giving the text of two nineteenth century poems. He illustrates the social background of this dialect and compares the language of the texts with common Piedmontese, concluding that it can hardly be considered a dialect apart, but only a Piedmontese with certain peculiar tendencies of its own. The text is accompanied by an analytical glossary.

A note on Una locuzione giudeo-italiana by L. Spitzer shows how 'private jargon' plays a part in the modern speech forms.⁷³ A more significant contribution, the article "Judaeo-Italian" in the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia⁷⁴ reveals a different approach from most other brief accounts of this kind in that ^{Spitzer} ~~he~~ emphasises the multiplicity and diversity of the phenomena covered by the term, rather than their unity. His views are not simply an adaptation of Cassuto's work, as is so often the case with other writers.

As mentioned above, G. Lazzeri's Antologia dei primi secoli della letteratura italiana included in the texts the Elegy La ienti de Sion plange e lotta based on Cassuto's edition.⁷⁵ However, the poem is preceded by a closely packed introduction which, although based principally on Cassuto's article in the Silloge Ascoli, is a useful general survey of studies of Judaeo-Italian texts and language. As Lazzeri, however, does not reveal any first-hand knowledge of the texts his interpretations naturally follow Cassuto's fairly closely, and his analysis of the linguistic questions involved does not supersede ^{that of} the latter.

An article based on the texts produced by Bedarida,⁷⁶ is the Contributo alla conoscenza del dialetto degli Ebrei di Livorno by A. Beccani, in which the author pays particular attention to the phonology of the Jewish speech of Leghorn.⁷⁷

The common features of Jewish languages in general, a subject fraught with pitfalls, were discussed by S. Birnbaum in an essay of 1944,⁷⁸ in which the author, no doubt in his desire to maintain a parallel with other Jewish languages such as Yiddish and 'Ladino', mentions a language called "Italki" which seems impossible to trace elsewhere;⁷⁹ nor does the author explain where he has found it. He makes the important point, however, that a common but erroneous concept is that of Jewish languages as inevitably "conservative", and shows that there is evidence which points to the contrary in certain cases. The subject of Jewish languages is one which has received very little attention apart from this article, and would well repay being further examined from a comparative standpoint.⁸⁰

An important contribution to the solution of many problems, especially linguistic, connected with Judaeo-Italian texts was published in 1949 by M. Berenblut. In A comparative study of Judaeo-Italian translations of Isaiah,⁸¹ the author concentrates on a series of Biblical texts available to him in the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York; these consist of six Hebrew-Italian glossaries, and MS. Adler 2291 (from which Cassuto had already published the Book of Amos).⁸² Because of the length of these works, and the consequent bulk of material, the author restricts his enquiry to the Book of Isaiah. His analysis of the texts shows the language

to be very eclectic; but as he is examining relatively late glossaries which draw on sources of diverse dates and provenance, some even written in other European languages, this is not perhaps surprising. Berenblut, however, finds in these texts little to support Cassuto's theory of a Judaeo-Italian koine. His study remains the most detailed account of a group of Judaeo-Italian Biblical texts; in particular, his examination of the influence of Hebrew syntax and vocabulary, etc. on the peculiar style and language of these glossaries is very thorough.

In 1950 a further Judaeo-Italian text was published by C. Roth.⁸³ This is a poem commemorating a group of Jews who were burnt in 1556 at Ancona. The editor, besides outlining the historical circumstances behind the composition of the work, makes some observations on the language and on the practice of writing in Hebrew characters. The poem, however, is of interest also for the parallels which may be drawn with the earlier thirteenth century Elegy La ienti de Sion. The transcription in Latin characters is published without the Hebrew texts and it would be interesting to know what in the original makes the editor adopt such spellings as contritto (l.82) and uscironno (l.76).

B. Terracini pursued his enquiries into modern Judaeo-Italian with his Residui di parlate giudeo-italiane raccolte a Pitigliano, Roma, Ferrara.⁸⁴ He explains that the original scheme (devised by la Rassegna Mensile di Israel) for collecting material, of having a live collector to record these dialects, had given way to the system of calling for written contributions from the various Italian-Jewish communities concerned. These pre-war contributions had seemed slight at the time and had been laid aside.

Now, however, in 1951, the prospect of enlarging them having been completely destroyed by the war (which had finally dispersed the ancient ghetto social unit), Terracini had found himself forced to turn to this material. It is a fragmentary collection of curious expressions and words. However, the contributions are of very variable value, since they were collected by people of differing abilities, as is evident from their explanations and annotations, some of which are illuminating and some quite erroneous. However, three lists of expressions are included, from Pitigliano, Rome and Ferrara, and some fragments of a Jewish-Venetian text of 1720. The author considers that to discuss this linguistic material on a comparative basis, bringing in elements from other parts of Italy, would need a great deal of material and would be a vast undertaking. However, he completes the study by giving valuable notes on the three collections, principally concerned with elucidating the etymology of those terms which derive from Hebrew. The writer points to the reliance of the Roman contributor on Del Monte's work and to some divergences of the Ferrara Jewish dialect from common Ferrarese. His remarks on the particular tone of this form of speech and its use of the Hebrew elements rather in the way popular speech uses proverbs, are particularly impressive.

A further collection of sonnets by Del Monte,⁸⁵ published posthumously, is particularly interesting from a linguistic point of view because of the appended material. It is preceded by the scenes from the sixteenth century comedy by Cristoforo Castelletti Le Stravaganze d'Amore where the character Perva appears.⁸⁶ She speaks a type of

Roman vernacular which was then obsolescent; and these passages are accompanied by a facing translation into modern Judaeo-Romanesco, in order to illustrate the affinity between her speech and the modern Jewish dialect - in contrast with modern Romanesco. The volume also contains a glossary of about two hundred and fifty items⁸⁷ and in an appendix A Milano contributed a further glossary of words and expressions of Hebrew origin used in Judaeo-Romanesco, drawn mainly from Del Monte's poems.⁸⁸

Terracini's review of Berenblut's thesis of 1949⁸⁹ constitutes in itself a considerable independent essay on Judaeo-Italian. While giving the work a generally favourable notice, he disagrees with much detail and criticises the technique of analysis and the "rigidity" of approach. On the question of transcription he pauses merely to say "questa trascrizione dà l'impressione di una lettura accurata".

In an article of 1956 which is principally concerned with Yiddish,⁹⁰ M. Weinreich proposed a more radical classification (with a new terminology) of the Judaeo-Romance languages. This is really an extension of Blondheim's theories, giving, as it does, greater emphasis to the affinities between these languages than to their close relation to the various common Romance languages.

L. Spitzer contributed two extensive studies of the Judaeo-Italian Elegy which explore particularly the literary and stylistic aspects of the poem.⁹¹ However, he prefaces the first of these two with a discussion of Judaeo-Romance, and Judaeo-Italian in particular, opposing the extreme views of M. Weinreich but following Cassuto's line of thought (with much

elaboration) as far as the language of the Elegy is concerned.

In 1962 Terracini completed his observations on the Judaeo-Italian dialects with a study of Giacomelli's notes on Judaeo-Italian which came to light after his death.⁹² These too include lists from Pitigliano, and Ferrara (including Lugo), a glossary of words of Hebrew origin and a glossary of dialect terms.

Terracini here discusses in greater detail the implications of this material, especially as regards the origins of the Ferrara community and that of Pitigliano from the linguistic evidence; e.g. a > e, a feature of giudeo-ferrarese, is a common trait of the dialects of the Romagna, but is not present in common Ferrarese. This would imply that at least some of the Jews of Ferrara originated in the neighbouring country areas. It is interesting to note that Terracini here apparently follows Cassuto's interpretation of the nature of the language of the Jews in the Middle Ages, especially the concept of a Judaeo-Italian koine.

Mention should be made here of a recent work, part of which concerns itself with the Jewish speech of Rome. In Il Ghetto di Roma,⁹³ A. Milano includes a chapter on the ghetto jargon of Rome and reproduces the glossary prepared for Del Monte's last work.

The latest work on a Judaeo-Italian text is a study by J.B. Sermoneta of some passages of the Divine Comedy quoted, in Hebrew characters, in the work of a near contemporary of Dante's, Yehuda Romano, a cousin of the famous Immanuel ha-Romi who is said (apparently without very good reasons) to have been an intimate of Dante's.⁹⁴ The article is interesting from several points of view, particularly for the light it throws on

the knowledge of Dante's work in his own day. Yehuda Romano, however, is interested in Dante as a philosopher; and the four short passages of the Divine Comedy quoted by him all deal with the quaestio he is discussing, the problem of prayer. However, Sermoneta's article is of special interest here because it includes a section on the transcription and language of the Dante passages. His interpretation of the linguistic background to these passages is based closely on the theories propounded by Cassuto as early as 1929; indeed, he seeks to demonstrate that the language of the extracts is the Judaeo-Italian koine envisaged by Cassuto.

* * * *

It is evident that these studies deal with a variety of aspects of the subject, often with little reference to any general problems. Many articles follow a similar pattern; they give a description of an unpublished text, a brief account of the system of transcription and an extract of the text, accompanied by a list of other Judaeo-Italian texts. They rarely attempt to explore the relationship between these texts.

Nevertheless, certain lines of thought emerge and, in particular, a kind of evolution in the theories as to the language of the texts and of the Jews in Italy is discernible.

In the nineteenth century scholars such as Schwab and Steinschneider thought of the texts as being literary Italian in Hebrew characters, in some cases relying on concepts of "corruption" and "misprints" to explain linguistic peculiarities. They tended to treat the use of the Hebrew alphabet as a curiosity of slight significance requiring little examination. Steinschneider's attitude is well summarised by Lazzeri:

"Quando... lo Steinschneider rese pubblica la sua bibliografia della Letteratura italiana dei giudei il lettore ebbe l'impressione che si trattasse puramente di una bibliografia degli scritti italiani di autori ebrei, e non sospettò, come del resto non aveva sospettato lo stesso Steinschneider, che nella serie elencata si nascondesse, tra i molti scritti in lingua letteraria, anche una notevole produzione in dialetto giudeo-italiano.⁹⁵

Steinschneider's account, moreover, makes no distinction between texts in Hebrew characters and those in Latin characters.

Italian scholars, such as Ascoli and Luzzato, were critical, revealing a more accurate insight into the nature of the language; but they themselves contributed little.

However, a new attitude was emerging: that those texts which were not in literary Italian were in a peculiar Jewish dialect (the attitude, in fact, which is expressed in the Lazzeri quotation above). This idea was reinforced by the increasing awareness and exploration (e.g. by Sacerdote, Modona, Cammeo) of vestiges of modes of expression peculiar to the Jews of certain Italian communities in modern times.

The works of Del Monte gave further consistency to this conception of Judaeo-Italian dialect by providing a literature which, although evidently taking its principal inspiration from Italian dialect writers such as Belli, might be seen also as an Italian parallel to the flourishing literature of Yiddish.

U. Cassuto, the most skilful and knowledgeable student of the ancient texts⁹⁶ and their problems, outlined a whole history of the Jewish speech of Italy; and his ideas naturally carried great weight. Cassuto further propounded the theory that the Jews in the Middle Ages had used, not only Judaeo-Italian dialects, but a veritable Judaeo-Italian koine; and that this was the origin of the modern regional forms of speech.

Other scholars (e.g. Roth) published texts and qualified the language as Judaeo-Italian dialect or koine; and these concepts appear again unchanged, for instance, as the background to Judaeo-Livornese in Bedarida's account of 1956 and in Sermoneta's article on the Judaeo-Italian passages of Dante as late as 1964.

The concept was further reinforced by the views of scholars such as Blondheim and Weinreich who envisaged a group of closely related Judaeo-Romance languages ultimately deriving from a Judaeo-Latin.

In all this, two very basic questions remain insufficiently explored: the method and circumstances of transcribing ~~an~~ Italian language into Hebrew characters, and secondly, the relationship of the language of the texts to non-Jewish Italian dialects and the development of the Italian language.

Notes to Chapter I

1. There are of course references to certain of the texts in earlier bibliographical works and catalogues, e.g. the two Siddurim and two Bible translations listed by G.B. De Rossi in his Manuscripti codices hebraici, Parma, 1803. (See notes 9,10,14,15 on pp.4-5, above).
2. Formulario delle orazioni degli Esraeliti secondo il rito italiano, traduzione di S.D. Luzzatto, p.VIII, note (d).
3. In Epistolario italiano-francese-latino, Padova, 1890, p. 942.
4. i.e. laudàno or more probably laudan^{fi}.
5. Milan, 1861, vol.III, pp. 402-3 (same article also in Studi Critici, Milan - Rome, 1861).
6. Un vocabulaire hébraïco-français in Rom. Stud., I (1871-75) pp. 163-196.
7. Glosses et glossaires hébreux-français du moyen-âge in Rom., I (1872) 146-176, and Deux Elégies du Vatican in Rom., III (1874) pp. 443-486. There is an extensive literature on Judaeo-French. A useful guide is R. Levy, The Background and the Significance of Judaeo-French in Mod. Phil., XLV (1947) pp. 1-7, and later works by the same author.
8. De vocabulis Francogallicis Judaice transscriptis in Rom. Stud., I (1875) pp. 197-220.
9. Letteratura italiana dei Giudei in Bibl., VI (1871) pp. 189-99; VIII (1873) pp. 29-35; 130-143; XI (1876) pp. 82-95, 113-127; continued in Ves. Is., XXV (1877) pp. 309-11, 340-3; XXVI (1878) pp. 13-16, 353-4, 375-7; XXVII (1879) pp. 16-18, 70-3, 203-7,

'H Buonanoti'

270-2, 304-6, 365-8; XXVIII (1880) pp. 146-50.

10. See Roth in R E J, LXXX (1925) p. 65.
11. Bibl. VIII (1873) p. 142.
12. Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana, Berlin 1852-60, 3 Vols.
13. A.E. Cowley, A Concise Catalogue of the Hebrew Printed Books in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1929. A surprising range of scholars seem to have been similarly irritated by the renowned bibliographer. e.g. C. Roth, having proved Steinschneider mistaken, remarks: "Ce n'est pas le seul endroit où la prétendue infaillibilité de Steinschneider se trouve en défaut". (R E J, LXXX(1925) p.65). Even more to the point, S. Savini talks of his "opera...condotta con un metodo addirittura esasperante, giacchè l'autore...ha la curiosa mania di citare le sue fonti con abbreviazioni costituenti vere e proprie sigle, additandone la chiave in altre opere sue". ('Aperusen', I (1922) p. 252). Whilst J. Jacobs aptly sums up Steinschneider's achievement:

"While an immense debt of gratitude is due to Steinschneider for the facilities he has thus afforded, it must be confessed that the style in which he has presented his results is sometimes unclear owing to excessive conciseness; and he has the unfortunate habit of piling up notices which turn out, on enquiry, to be perfectly useless". ("Bibliography" in Jew. Enc. vol.III, p. 201).
14. See below, p.23.
15. See below, note 44.
16. Di una edizione del 'Siddur Terilloth' ovvero 'ordo precum' in

lingua volgare e tipi ebraici sconosciuta ai bibliografi in Ves.Is., XXXV (1887) pp. 76-80, 110-114.

17. Siddur Terillòth ovvero: Ordine di preghiere in ¹⁴Biblicfil XI (1890) pp. 104-6.
18. Vol II, p. 206.
19. Le Maqré Dardeqé in R E J, XVI (1888) pp. 253-268; XVII (1888) pp. 111-124, 285-298; XVIII (1889) pp. 108-117.
20. Una lettera dell'Ascoli a M. Schwab sulla sua edizione del Maqré Dardeqé in Ves. Is., XXXVIII (1890) p. 144.
21. i.e. ambidia or amvidia. Schwab reads it as invidia.
22. This is the title found in the Parma manuscript of the Italian translation.
23. Una versione italiana inedita del 'Moreh Nebukhim' di Mosheh ben Maimon in 'Rendiconti...Lincei, Classe Scienze morali storiche e filologiche', Serie V, vol. I (1892) pp. 308-325.
24. Ibid., p. 315, n. 3.
25. Ibid., p. 316.
26. Ves. Is., XLI (1893) pp. 14-17.
27. cf. Terracini's remarks on the difficulty of dealing with the linguistic situation of the Italian Jews after the Second World War in RMI, XVII (1951) p. 5.
28. In Ves. Is., XLI (1893) pp. 60-62, 85-88, 121-123, 154-157.

29. M G W J, XLII (1898) pp. 33-7, 74-9, 116-23, 162-9, 261-5, 315-22, 418-24, 466-72, 517-22, 551-7; XLIII (1899) pp. 32-6, 91-6, 185-90, 266-70, 311-21, 417-21, 472-6, 514-20, 562-71; XLIV (1900) pp. 80-91, 235-49.
30. Ibid. XLIII (1898) pp. 317-319.
31. The first article by Cammeo, entitled 'La Helbenà' o le contrarietà della vita, appeared in Ves. Is., LII (1904) p. 437-8. Further articles by Cammeo followed in Ves. Is., LVII (1909) pp. 169-70, 214-15, 314-15, 358-61, 459-461, 504-5; LVIII (1910) pp. 8-9, 148-9, 403-4, 448-50, 506-7, 543-5; LIX (1911) pp. 25-26, 52-53, 102-4, 143-4.
32. Parlata Ebraica in Ves. Is., LVII (1909) pp. 254-260.
33. Rome, 1908.
34. Alcune note ebraiche di contabilità del secolo XVI in Riv. Is., VIII (1911) pp. 54-64, 104-5.
35. See note 19, above.
36. Un registro ebraico di pegni del secolo XV in Z H B., XV (1912) pp. 182-5; XVI (1913) pp. 127-142.
37. Un'antica poesia di autore ebreo in Riv. Is., X (1913-15) pp. 90-99.
38. See below, p. 19.
39. Une ancienne version italienne des Prophètes in R E J, LXXII (1921) pp. 29-39.
40. 'Aperusen', I (1922) pp. 247-263.

41. Essai d'un vocabulaire comparatif des parlers romans des Juifs au Moyen-âge in Rom. XLIX (1923) 1-47, (republished as part of his Les parlers Judéo-Romans et la Vetus Latina, Paris 1925.)
42. See for example, R. Levy, The Background and the Significance of Judeo-French in Mod. Phil., XLV (1947) pp. 1-7 (cit.)
43. La Vetus Latina e le traduzioni giudaiche medioevali della Bibbia in 'Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni', II (1926) pp. 145-162.
44. Un hymne sabbatique du XVI^e siècle en judéo-italien in R E J, LXXX (1925) pp. 60-80, 182-206; LXXXI (1925) pp. 55-78. The bibliographical part of the article is entitled by the author himself an 'Essai de bibliographie du judéo-italien'. (vol. LXXX pp. 63-65).
45. Sonetti giudaico-romaneschi, Rome, 1927.
46. These are mostly comedies or comic scenes: Lucilla f'a da sé, 1924; Un intermezzo di canzoni antiche, 1928; Il Siclo d'argento, 1935; Alla 'Banca di Memo' e Il lascito del Sor Barocas, Città di Castello, 1950.
47. Ebrei di Livorno, Tradizioni e Gergo, Florence, 1956.
48. Ricerche folkloristiche e linguistiche degli Ebrei d'Italia in R M I, II (1926) pp. 24-30 (erroneously numbered 361-367).
49. R M I, IV (1929) pp. 21-35.
50. In Silloge linguistica...Ascoli (= A G I, XXII-XXIII), Turin, 1929, pp. 349-408.
51. By Artom, see note 37 above.

52. See below, pp. 202-3; and see S. Debenedetti Elegia giudeo-italiana in G S L I, XCVII (1931) pp. 372-3.
53. To quote only some of the more comprehensive collections: G. Lazzeri, Antologia dei primi secoli della letteratura italiana, Milan, 1954 (reprint) pp. 177-193; E. Monaci - F. Arese, Crestomazia italiana dei primi secoli, Rome, 1955, pp. 33-36; G. Contini, Poeti del Duecento, Milan, 1960, I, pp. 35-42, II, pp. 796-7.
54. Op. cit., pp. 371-376.
55. In Atti del I Congresso Nazionale delle tradizioni popolari, Florence, 1929-30, pp. 114-121.
56. Il libro di Amos in traduzione giudeo-italiana in Miscellanea... H.P. Chajes, Florence 1930, pp. 19-38.
57. G. Lazzeri, Antologia...cit., p. 179.
58. Saggi delle antiche traduzioni giudeo-italiane della Bibbia in A S E, I (1934-5) pp. 101-134.
59. Les traductions judéo-italiens^{ne} du Rituel in R E J, LXAXIX (1930) pp. 260-80, and La Terillàh delle nostre nonne in R M I, V (1930) pp. 144-148.
60. Travaux sur le judéo-italien: U. Cassuto in Rom., LVII (1931) pp. 440-1.
61. New York, 1933.
62. Nuovi sonetti giudaico-romaneschi, Rome, 1933.
63. See Carlo Del Monte, Crescenzo Del Monte, Rome, 1955, p. 18.

64. C. Del Monte, Nuovi Sonetti..., cit. pp. 7-87.
65. See review by R. Giacomelli in Arch. Rom., XVII (1933) pp. 439-444, where he maintains that Del Monte strains the forms of the modern dialect in order to complete his translations.
66. Il dialetto di Roma al secolo XVI e sua sopravvivenza in R M I, X (1935-6) pp. 290-296.
67. R M I, XII (1937) pp. 102-112.
68. Milan, 1937, vol. XXXIII, pp. 270-1.
69. Festschrift...A. Kaminka, Vienna, 1937, pp. 129-141.
70. A G I, XXIX (1937) pp. 138-160. The title of this work is spelt differently according to the language in which it is being discussed. (I have used the spelling of its first modern editor, Schwab.)
71. The General Problems of the Judaeo-Romance in the light of the Magre Dardege in J Q R, XLII (1951-2) pp. 57-77.
72. Due composizioni in versi giudeo-piemontesi dell'Ottocento in R M I, XII (1938) pp. 164-183.
73. In Arch. Rom., XXIII (1939) p. 464.
74. New York, 1942, vol. VI, pp. 255-6.
75. See above, note 50.
76. See Ebrei di Livorno, cit., p. XVII.
77. I D, XVIII (1942) pp. 189-202.

78. Jewish Languages in Essays presented to J.H. Herz, London, 1944, pp. 51-67.
79. יִטְלִי (i.e. Italqi) is Hebrew for 'Italian', but is this all the author intends?
80. Cf. M. Weinreich's similar complaint in Rom. Phil., IX, p. 404.
81. New York, 1949; see review by B. Terracini, mentioned below, p.28.
82. It is important to note that of Cassuto's 'Amos' texts the Adler 2291 MS is much the less dialectal of the two. For the article presenting these two texts see note 58, above.
83. Un'elegia giudeo-italiana sui martiri di Ancona 1556-7 in Scritti in onore di Riccardo Bachi, Città di Castello, 1950, pp. 147-156.
84. R M I, XVII (1951) pp. 3-11, 63-72, 113-124.
85. Sonetti postumi giudaico-romaneschi e romaneschi, Rome, 1955.
86. Ibid., pp. 1-32.
87. Ibid., pp. 197-215.
88. Ibid., pp. 236-260.
89. Rom. Phil., X (1956-7) pp. 243-258.
90. The Jewish Languages of Romance Stock and their Relation to Earliest Yiddish in Rom. Phil., IX (1956) pp. 403-428.
91. La bellezza artistica dell'antichissima elegia giudeo-italiana in

Studi in onore di A. Monteverdi, Modena, 1959, II, pp. 788-806;
and The Influence of Hebrew and Vernacular Poetry on the Judaeo-Italian
Elegy, in Twelfth Century Europe and the Foundations of Modern
Society, ed. M. Clagett, Madison, 1961, pp. 115-130.

92. Le parlate giudeo-italiane negli appunti di R. Giacomelli in Scritti
in Memoria di F. Luzzatto, Città di Castello, 1962 (= R M I, XXVIII,
nos. 3-4) pp. 260-295.

93. Rome, 1964, pp. 435-471.

94. Una trascrizione in caratteri ebraici di alcuni brani filosofici
della Commedia in Romanica et Occidentalia, études dédiées à la
mémoire de Hiram Peri, Oxford, 1963, pp. 23-42.

95. Antologia..., cit., p. 177.

96. As the more significant of the texts under consideration here belong
to periods ranging at least from the thirteenth to the sixteenth
century, they cannot be termed together as either 'Mediaeval' or
'Renaissance' and this term has been used to refer to them collect-
ively.

Chapter II

The Use of Hebrew Characters and the Background to the Translations.

The first important problem which these texts pose is the reason for the use of the Hebrew alphabet.

One might be tempted to surmise simply that the Hebrew alphabet was used because the writers were Jews, and in some ways this would not be so far from the truth. But the immediate question arises: if this were the case, why did not the writer use not only Hebrew characters but the Hebrew language too? On the other hand if the authors of these texts chose to write in Italian rather than in Hebrew why did they not use the usual alphabet for Italian?

Many of the works mentioned in chapter I discuss this problem, generally in a very cursory fashion, so that a satisfactory explanation has not really been given. The most thoroughgoing attempt to answer this question is made by Roth in his introductory remarks to the text of the poem by Mordechai Dato where he gives a series of possible reasons, some of which had already been suggested before.¹ These may be summarised as follows: Ignorance of the Latin alphabet (to learn the Hebrew alphabet was a religious duty; to learn the Latin alphabet, a luxury); ~~appropriateness~~ (in a long Hebrew work it would seem absurd to introduce explanatory words in a different alphabet - with the development of printing this factor is accentuated as the Hebrew presses did not have Latin type); secrecy (particularly important in account books); respect (it would seem sacrilegious to have a religious work in Latin characters). Roth concludes: "Tels sont, peut-on croire, les principales raisons qui ont produit la longue série d'écrits judéo-italiens..."²

However, although these factors may have played a part in the case of certain individual texts,³ they cannot be considered to amount to a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon as a whole. Moreover, some of these factors, although logically quite admissible in the general terms used by Roth, are not really borne out by the evidence.⁴ The alleged want of Latin type by Hebrew printers, for instance, cannot be considered a significant factor, for there is a signal example of a Hebrew printer, to whom this cannot apply. Gherson Soncino published at Fano in 1505⁵ the first printed edition of a Siddur translation, the Judaeo-Italian work which was to receive most attention from printers.⁶ In this same year he published an edition of the poems of Serafino Aquilano which he dedicated to Elisabetta Gonzaga, Duchess of Urbino,⁷ and four Latin works,⁸ besides two works in Hebrew.⁹ Apart from this he printed a considerable number of other Italian and Latin works in his long publishing career.¹⁰ So there was no reason why he should not have printed the Siddur translation in Latin type, or a combination of Latin and Hebrew type, had he so wished. Also, although the whole of text N (a printed translation of Pirke Aboth) is in Hebrew characters (including the page numbers), on the last page we find the phrase "Con liæntia [sic] de Superiori", in Latin characters, so the printer clearly had Latin type.

A desire for secrecy might be thought to have been influential in the case of account books recording confidential financial transactions, or in the case of religious, polemical works, etc. offensive to the authorities. In the former category, ^{ix}the practice of keeping accounts in Hebrew, which obviously made it difficult for the books to be examined for whatever reason by Gentiles -

as is indicated by the inclusion of a clause forbidding this practice in a Papal Bull of 1555.¹¹ Yet this properly applies only to the keeping of accounts in normal Hebrew, and has little relevance to Judaeo-Italian texts. For despite Roth's remarks the accounts known cannot properly be considered Judaeo-Italian but normal Hebrew texts. He says: "La plupart de ceux qui se sont conservés sont en ce qu'on appelle par politesse hébreu, mais la majeure partie des mots (y compris tous ceux qui ont de l'importance) sont en italien."¹² This seems to me a failure to differentiate between the basic language of a text and the loan words included in it. To take, for instance, ~~in~~ one of the account books published by Cassuto (who calls it, quite accurately, "alcune note ebraiche"): although there are certainly important Italian elements in it, these are limited to a few words, such as articles of clothing of a specific type which could not be translated, e.g. cioppe and gamurre, and proper nouns, (months of the year, names of the debtors and currency). To have these in Hebrew (at least in the case of debtors' names and the type of currency being used) would not only have involved the unnecessary complication of translating them into Hebrew, but could easily have been extremely hazardous, as confusion of identity or doubts about the exactitude of the amounts involved are the last things one wants in an account book. Apart from these words the language is normal Hebrew. The following is the first entry in the account book, as translated by Cassuto.¹³ I have underlined any word or numeral which is in Italian in the original text (the whole of which, of course is in Hebrew characters except for a peculiar § sign for soldi); all other words are Hebrew.

"18 novem. 310 [1549]

Tomeo Gibaldo deve cinquanta scudi¹⁴ d'oro in oro
da pagarsi al principio di gennaio¹⁵ 310 [1550], e ha
scritto qui sotto messer¹⁶ Francesco¹⁷ Gusella di
pagarmeli, se quegli mancherà."

The following is the heading to another account book, in Cassuto's translation:¹⁸

"Con l'aiuto di Dio possiamo noi operare e prosperare!
Amen. Questo è l'inventario del banco della Vacca che abbiamo
fatto nel mese di marzo 237. Che Dio lo faccia aumentare a
migliaia e a miriadi, e mandi la sua benedizione in esso e in
ogni intrapresa delle nostre mani, per benedizione e per lunghezza
di giorni! Amen."

Here, there is only one word, the month marzo, in Italian in the original -
although it will be noted that the year is given according to the Hebrew system.
Hence these accounts are not Judaeo-Italian texts (where the language is inten-
tionally Italian but in Hebrew characters), but were written in normal Hebrew
with Italian words used where they could not conveniently be avoided.

If secrecy had been an important motive as far as other texts were concerned,
it would surely have been more secretive, especially before a regular censor-
ship was established in the 16th century,¹⁹ to write entirely in Hebrew. Fur-
thermore, the kind of works which the Judaeo-Italian texts contain give no hint
of anything secretive or subversive, or even polemical. Even when a fairly
regular censorship was instituted, it was almost solely concerned with expurgating
anything which might be construed as defamatory of Christianity and many pole-
mical theological works, or even less offensive matter, often show very heavy
deletions by the censor.²⁰ But a large number of Judaeo-Italian texts bear

the censor's signature without any evidence of any deletions at all. Moreover, this very signature bears witness to the evident inadequacy of using the Hebrew alphabet if one of its main purposes was secrecy. It was the Hebrew works themselves which were subject to scrutiny for offensive matter and it is hard to see why, for instance, there should be a desire to keep secret a translation of the Siddur if the original was open to examination and found inoffensive. Nor did the very translation into the vernacular of works sacred also to the Christian faith (such as the Bible) cause any concern before the Counter-Reformation as many translations into normal Italian were freely attempted before the sixteenth century.²¹

It is clear that there was no hard and fast rule not to permit translations by the Jews even when censorship was in force, for the censor of text A has his doubts and makes a note to seek advice from higher authority, thus:

"Si concede questo officio vulgare a M^r Leon da Ruvigo heb^o per me F. Luigi sine che venga la risolutione da Roma se li officio delli hebrei siano proibiti come li vulgari de cristiani".²²

One must conclude therefore that secrecy does not help to give a fundamental explanation of the use of Hebrew characters for the writing of Italian nor help to explain the origins of the practice.

In order to see this apparently strange phenomenon in perspective a word is necessary first about the use of other "alien" alphabets in similar circumstances, and secondly about the use of the Hebrew alphabet by the Jews in a world-wide context; we can then examine the circumstances which engendered the practice among the Jews in Italy in the Middle Ages.

In the broadest context, the use of a 'foreign' alphabet for many languages is quite widespread and seems to have occurred sporadically in many circumstances

where two cultures have met. Apart from such well-known instances as the complete change from one alphabet to another effected in Turkey in 1928, an example, of more immediate relevance, is the charter from Cagliari, dating from the end of the 11th century, generally considered an early Italian text and included as such in the more serious anthologies,²³ which is in Greek characters but in Campidanese dialect.²⁴ Literary oddities of this kind using an 'alien' alphabet are quite considerable in number and ^{occur} in many languages;²⁵ it is a practice by no means restricted to the Jews. On the other hand, the Jews are particularly apt to produce this kind of work, living as they have for so long in many countries of the world but having a single religion in which a single language and alphabet plays a paramount part. D. Diringer, in studying the history of alphabets, considers it a basic principle that "alphabet follows religion".²⁶

Hence it is not perhaps surprising that the Jews should have used the Hebrew alphabet to write a great number of languages. Thus there are extensive literatures in Judaeo-Spanish, Judaeo-German and Judaeo-Persian all using the Hebrew alphabet - and it has been used less extensively for a great number of the languages of the countries where Jews have resided, even for English before 1296; there was even a journal entitled the Light of Truth, published in Bombay between 1877 and 1882, partly in English, and partly in Mahrati written in Hebrew characters.²⁷

Against this international background the use of Hebrew characters for the vernacular emerges as a frequent practice amongst the Jews which is by no means restricted to Italy. Yet apart from this, certain factors can be discerned in the particular circumstances of the Jews of Italy which gave rise to the practice of writing Italian in Hebrew characters and help to explain its

its origins. Indeed the chronological development of the practice has been largely ignored and the solutions proposed treat it as though it were a static phenomenon, the possible origins of this system of writing having been ignored; for in fact no attempt seems to have been made to compare even the systems of transcription of two different texts.²⁸ Yet it is known to have occurred at least from the 11th century to the 18th and underwent changes and development like any other writing system, although as this literature never achieved anything like the kind of wide recognition and learned participation enjoyed by a national literature, these developments are somewhat irregular and limited. Nevertheless, a system such as that used in certain of the Siddur translations of the 15th century represents a greater refinement and complexity than any of the other Judaeo-Italian texts, the result of a long period of development. This will be dealt with more fully in cap. IV below; what concern us here are the origins of the practice.

When attempting to see any pattern of development of this kind the uncertain dating of many of the Judaeo-Italian works is a drawback. However, one of the oldest continuous texts must be the Elegy attributed by Cassuto to the late 12th or early 13th century. Older still, the numerous Italian words quoted in his Arukh by Nathan ben Jechiel (before 1035 - 1106) must be considered one of the earliest instances of Italian in Hebrew characters.²⁹ And probably one of the earliest, if minor, uses of the Hebrew alphabet for Italian, must have been the Italian place names frequently given by the scribe in the colophons of Hebrew works written in Italy; the month is frequently given its Italian name although the year is given according to the Hebrew system.³⁰ Hence before Italian began to be written (in the normal way) for literary purposes, the Jews had already begun to establish the practice of writing it in Hebrew

characters, if on a very limited scale. When the Jews began to write the vernacular there were few available precedents of Italian in the Latin alphabet to act as models - indeed the Jews may well have felt that the use of the Latin alphabet implied the use of the Latin language - and so the Hebrew alphabet, familiar and well-established as a literary vehicle, was used.

This is not to say that there were as yet no Italian texts, but these would have had to be commonly available, and have established Italian as a literary medium, before they could have had sufficient impact on Jewish writers to make them abandon their normal literary alphabet. The few Italian texts which have survived from the period before R. Nathan was active, such as the Placiti capuani, the Postilla amiatina, the inscription in S. Clemente and the Confessione umbra etc., are unlikely to have even been known to any Jews, and certainly give no indication of the existence of an influential literature.³¹

Indeed once Italian was firmly established as a literary language Jewish poets do begin to write in normal Italian as well as Hebrew, the earliest known being Manoello Giudeo or Immanuel Romano, contemporary with Dante, who exchanged poems with Bosone da Gubbio and wrote at least four sonnets and a frottola in Italian.³²

A Jewish writer in Italy in the Middle Ages would be much more likely (especially as early as the beginning of the 13th century, when the practice was already established for a literary work - witness the Elegia) to be familiar with the manner of spelling Italian place names in the colophons of Hebrew works, and with the Italian words in the Arukh than with the modest Italian works as yet available.

This practice cannot be treated as a sudden invention; no more so than the practice of using the Latin alphabet for Italian. The pattern of develop-

ment has some similarities: first occasional words in Latin documents, then occasional longer passages followed by somewhat infrequent and inarticulate texts and finally a fully-fledged literature. However, the last phase does not apply to the Judaeo-Italian texts, whose literary achievements are extremely modest.

It is not accurate, however, to treat these texts as a series of improvisations (although we find the same element of individual vagaries present in any spelling system which has not reached the stage of careful and authoritative codification). It is frequently assumed by scholars of individual texts, that given this background of written Hebrew but Italian vernacular, the writing of Italian in Hebrew characters was in each individual case in the nature of an improvisation.³³ The results of comparing the systems of different texts, however,³⁴ show that despite considerable vagaries and variants (which are found even in the early stages of major literary languages) there is discernible a certain degree of uniformity, bearing witness to orthographic habits developed over a long period.

The question of the connection between the systems of transcription in the different texts has received closer attention from French scholars in relation to Judaeo-French texts; and Darmesteter attributes the uniformity discernible in their orthography to the creation of the system by Rashi in his French glosses.³⁵ Rashi's influence on subsequent Bible study was certainly sufficient to account in itself for the adoption of the same system by other writers in France.

Nathan ben Jehiel's Arukh was widely used and influential in Talmudical study (in many countries, not only Italy) and although Italian texts do not show the same degree of orthographical uniformity as the French ones, and mere coincidence is more difficult to exclude in Italian than in French when written



in Hebrew characters³⁶ nevertheless, Nathan's spellings have sufficient in common with later texts to lead to the conclusion that he may have had a determining influence. - At the least the five hundred or so Italian words written by him in Hebrew characters certainly established a precedent which one cannot ignore.

When R. Nathan wrote his Arukh he drew on many literary sources and it has been suggested e.g. that his geographical information was derived not so much from his own travels as from other writers; similarly it has been doubted whether he really had a mastery of all the languages he quotes in the Arukh and did not rather quote words which he found in other reference works.³⁷ However, his Italian was certainly derived from his own knowledge of the spoken language. In any case as has been pointed out above, what Italian texts could he have read? It was inevitable that, especially for isolated Italian words in a long Hebrew work, he should use the Hebrew alphabet.

The stimulus to produce continuous texts in Italian was the desire to provide something for the unlearned, an audience quite unlike that of R. Nathan who certainly wrote for scholars.

To learn at least to read the Hebrew letters was, as Roth points out, a religious necessity for a Jewish child in Italy, as elsewhere. How seriously the duty of imparting instruction was taken by parents is illustrated by a Sicilian document of the early 15th century³⁸; probably in every family there was someone to teach the first rudiments.³⁹ However, it may not be inferred from this, in order to explain the Judaeo-Italian texts, that the Jews could not understand the Latin alphabet. Sacerdote goes so far as to assert simply that the reason the Latin alphabet was not used was that the Jews were "estranei alla coltura nazionale anche la più elementare".⁴⁰

Yet the Jews played an important part in the Italian Renaissance, the influences being reciprocal, especially in the development of the religious and philosophical ideas of the time. For instance such scholars as Elia del Medigo, Flavio Mitridate and Jochanan Alemanno played an important part in the development of the thought of Ficino and Pico della Mirandola.⁴¹ And in Alemanno's Hebrew works there is the same kind of philosophical speculation on love, the same neoplatonic theory that was the product of the philosophical ferment of the late 15th and early 16th centuries as expounded in Ficino's commentary on the Symposium, Benivieni's Canzone d'amore, Equicola's Libro di natura d'amore, Bembo's Asolani etc., (not to mention Leone Abravanel's Dialoghi d'amore, an evident participant in the two cultures). Here, to come to the linguistic aspects of this literary activity, one must remember that one of the principal roles of the Jewish scholars was the translation into Latin of Cabbalistic, Biblical, Arabic and Greek works (the last two groups being previously available only in Hebrew translations).

Elia del Medigo, who taught philosophy at Padua to many Christian scholars, notably Pico della Mirandola, undertook for Pico the translation into Latin of several works of Averroes, and composed a series of annotations on the Physics, etc.⁴² Pico eventually learned Hebrew himself, but even then the two scholars continued to correspond, in particular when Pico was preparing his famous 900 propositions. It is worth noting that at least on one occasion Elia answered a series of inquiries from Pico in a long letter partly Italian and partly Latin,⁴³ an occurrence which was not rare in Italian letter-writing of the time.⁴⁴ This of course is only one instance of the participation of the Jews in Italian cultural life, but it does serve to point the inappropriateness of broad generalisations, such as that the Jews in Italy did not understand the

Latin alphabet. For there was as much variation in the cultural capacities of Italian Jews as in those of any other society, culture, as always, being the prerogative of the few. The Hebrew scholars holding conversation in the circle of the Florentine humanists, and the wealthy, cultured patron of letters, Jechiel da Pisa, who acted as a kind of Lorenzo il Magnifico of the Tuscan Jews (and indeed was favoured by Lorenzo himself)⁴⁵ were in a world apart from the anonymous crowd (of which we perhaps get a glimpse in the diary of a Sienese Jew⁴⁶ who could barely write intelligibly in any language). There were many Jews who contributed to Italian literature during the period Judaeo-Italian texts were produced, or were influenced by it. There are clear signs of the influence of Dante, for instance, on several Hebrew writers. His work was familiar enough to the philosopher Yehudah Romano, who was his contemporary, for the latter to select expertly passages from the Purgatorio and Paradiso illustrative of his philosophical argument⁴⁷; and the influence of Dante on the Hebrew works of Immanuel Romano⁴⁸ and Mosè da Rieti⁴⁹ are well known.

On a more mundane level, Jews translated into Latin, even orally, for this was a frequent necessity whenever a Hebrew document (frequently a will) had relevance in a court case.⁵⁰ It is usually considered that the elegant Italian rabbinic of the 15th and 16th centuries was strongly influenced by Italian calligraphy.⁵¹ It is hard to see how this influence could have been exercised unless Jewish scribes were accustomed to reading Italian. In some cases, in fact, the very author of a Judaeo-Italian work is also known to have written in normal Italian. Leon Modena wrote a lengthy apology of Judaism for non-Jewish readers in fluent Italian,⁵² although most of his literary output was in Hebrew. An even more striking case is that of Mordechai Dato's Hymne sabbatique which seems to belie Roth's attribution of the use of Hebrew charac-

ters . to ignorance of Latin script. Roth himself, indeed, without seeming to be aware of the contradiction, does point out that the refrain is written in Latin characters "d'une main fort élégante, ce qui prouve manifestement que l'usage de caractères hébreux était voulu et non le fait de l'ignorance"!⁵³

It is clear then, that in many cases if the writer of a Judaeo-Italian text had wanted to couch his work in Latin characters, he would have been capable of doing so. Nevertheless, although it is impossible to make any estimate of numbers, one must assume that those who knew Latin or its alphabet were relatively few. This would have had little importance if the texts had been intended for the writer's equals. This is the crucial point. The Judaeo-Italian texts were not intended for the learned, or the type of scholar mentioned above. In the framework of the literary activity of the Jews in Italy, which was mainly in Hebrew but occasionally in Latin or Italian, the Judaeo-Italian texts form a very minor, only semi-literary element, aimed at a particular audience. Indeed, it is the reader for whom the translations were intended that is the key to the problem. A closer examination of the Judaeo-Italian texts makes it clear that they were destined for the most unlearned sector of the Jewish community, the young and, in particular, women. Jewish primary education centred round ^{the} study of Hebrew and the main religious texts. The first stage was to learn to read the Hebrew letters and later study the Hebrew language, the Bible and the Talmud, the latter being the main subject for higher learning.⁵⁴ However, this was intended mainly for boys and although there were some learned women (a woman, Estellina Conat, is known to have printed a book on her own account in the sixteenth century⁵⁵), yet the level of learning amongst women was generally very much lower than that of men. Girls in fact very often followed the same course as the boys for the first two years,⁵⁶

during which they learned to recognise the letters of the alphabet and to read aloud, but rarely went much further than this.⁵⁷ Hence women formed a large social group who could read the Hebrew (and only the Hebrew) alphabet while knowing little of the Hebrew language; the only language they understood was their vernacular, Italian. The Prefatory remarks to H (the Tefilloth Latine) clearly indicate that it was printed for women.⁵⁸ Moreover, an interesting feature of this work, the system of foliation, gives us a nice indication of the abilities expected in the reader. The leaves of the MS. Siddur translations are not numbered, nor are those of the 1505 printed version (G). In the first half of the 16th century printed books had begun to adopt foliation, and later, pagination; but the method used in H is peculiar. It shows that the reader was not expected to be able to read Italian numerals (i.e. "Arabic" numerals) but neither could he be expected to understand the Hebrew numerical system. This can be the only explanation for the printer's eschewing the very simple pagination (from the point of view of fount and length), which ordinary Hebrew numeration would have involved (two or three letters, with no vowel points), for a most cumbersome system of writing the Italian numerals in full, in Hebrew characters, including vowel points. So that, for instance, folio 181 is written

ינא הַשְּׁמִינִי עֶשְׂרִים cento ottanta uno, which takes over half a line of type.

Other texts too explicitly state that they have been made for women.

The scribe of E explicitly states in the colophon⁵⁹ that he wrote the text for the daughter of Isaac b. Immanuel da San Miniato, and the scribe of B makes it clear⁶⁰ that the work was prepared for a similar kind of patron, a lady named Rivka. There are signs of a similar intention in some Yiddish writers of the sixteenth century.⁶¹

The majority of Judaeo-Italian texts are translations or glossaries of

PLATE I

Text K (Parma 3068),
f. 1a (greatly enlarged),
showing the manner of pre-
sentation and the calligraphy.

[illegible]

liturgical works. Cassuto has several times outlined what he sees as the probable development of this literature. He sees the first stage as the compilation of Hebrew-Italian Biblical glossaries as an aid to the translation of the Bible, leading to continuous written translations being made. Cassuto managed to identify, on the suggestion of Savini,⁶² a translation of the complete Old Testament which might be considered a final stage in the evolution of this process. The translations of the Siddur, the daily prayer book, are closely connected with this production as the Siddur contains much Biblical material; and Cassuto sees the Siddur translations as a secondary and later stage in the development of the Bible translation activity.⁶³

The evidence seems to me to indicate rather that the Siddur was the principal work round which the translations grew.

The Siddur manuscripts show every sign of being more fully developed than the Bible translations. There are no elegant Bible texts to compare with the illuminated Siddur translations. The latter show a much more fully developed pointing system - there are no Bible translations with the methegh. Hence by the 15th century, the Siddur translations show signs of a long tradition of copying and development of fairly widespread production and of completeness. The Bible translations such as K and L, on the other hand (the earliest date from the sixteenth century), give the impression of incompleteness and sketchiness especially from the point of view of their format. In no cases do the extant Biblical translations show the elegance and polish of the finished product.⁶⁴

Although the compilation of glossaries and translation of the Siddur must both have been well under way long before the 15th century, it is significant that most of the Siddur translations date from the 15th century, whereas the glossaries mostly date from the 16th century.

The Siddur would suggest itself for more urgent translation than the Bible as it was in daily personal use, and therefore of more immediate importance. Most of the Biblical glossaries and translations are only of parts or certain books of the Bible.⁶⁵ Extant normal Hebrew Siddurim (of similar time, place and format to the translated Siddurim), to which some parts of the Bible have been appended,⁶⁶ may well have been the models for the translations of the Siddur followed by certain books of the Bible, and leading finally to a complete Bible. From the available bibliographies of Judaeo-Italian texts it is clear that the principal use of the system of writing Italian in Hebrew characters was for translation, notably of the Siddur. For the texts which we are fairly certain are not translations are very few.⁶⁷ The source of this translation activity can be traced to the classroom, for the method of studying the text and learning Hebrew in the early stages was by word-for-word translation.⁶⁸

This also explains the greater completeness of the Siddur translation, for the Siddur was used as the primary reading and writing text, pupils being encouraged at an early age to learn passages by heart and to translate it.⁶⁹

The Judaeo-Italian translations clearly progressed little beyond this stage, because there was no real opportunity for them to be developed as autonomous pieces of literature. Inevitably they were considered of little literary merit by the Hebrew scholar and no writer of talent adopted this medium, having to hand at least two mature literary languages, Hebrew and Italian. This is borne out by the contrast in language and style with the few texts which are original compositions.⁷⁰

It is this closeness to the classroom which explains the style of the Judaeo-Italian Bible and Siddur translations - very literal and strongly affected

linguistically by the original - rather than a traditional Jewish translation of both Bible and Siddur postulated by Cassuto.⁷¹

The literal translation, word-for-word, of the foreign language is an obvious and age-old method of language teaching - and is especially likely to be used where specific written texts, easily available and of particular importance, are involved. It is not surprising then that this method, also using the Siddur, is still usual today. So much so that a recent Jewish writer in an English manual on the Siddur warns against the unidiomatic language liable to be produced by this method.⁷² This work itself affords further confirmation of the origins of the Italian Siddur translation in elementary education, ~~for~~ if we compare the translation provided by Slotki (who gives a 'literal' word-for-word translation, but adds notes to nearly every phrase to put it into idiomatic English). It shows a striking similarity to the Judaeo-Italian Siddur in style although in a different language and composed under such different conditions:

Text A (ff. 39a-39b)

E foro conpliti li celi
e la tera
e tuto l'osta loro
e conplivo Domededh
ne la di setima
l'opera soa che fece
e posavo
ne la di setima
de tuta l'opera soa
che fece

Slotki (pp. 68-69)

and they were finished the heavens
and the earth
and all their host
and had finished God
on the day the seventh
his work which he had made
and he rested
on the day the seventh
from all his work
which he had made

e benedivo Domedeh	and blessed God
la di setima	day the seventh
e santefecavo esa	and hallowed it
che in esa posavo	because thereon He rested
de tuta l'opera soa	from all his work
che criavo	which he had created
Domedeh a fare	God to do

Other Bible translations in a completely different environment serve to emphasize that translation with these characteristics is not the product of a Jewish tradition in Italy, but the consequence of a very close adherence to any authoritative text of established literary value, while translating into a language without mature literary standards. C.A. Mastrelli's description of the characteristics of the Gothic translation of 370 A.D. sounds strikingly like Cassuto's description of the Judaeo-Italian translations.⁷³ But it is not suggested that the extant Siddur MSS. were made for use in the classroom. On the contrary, the evidence from the colophons etc., makes it clear that the more elegant were specifically produced for adult patrons. But this must be considered the root source from which translation of the Siddur sprang, i.e. the translation does not diverge much from what was learnt and taught in the classroom. A fully-fledged literary Italian translation would have demanded considerable independence of mind and literary ability in Italian. Although respectable normal Italian translations of the Bible were made in Italy, it must be borne in mind that they were made from the Vulgate, (where a scholar with these qualities had already done the spadework); and the first translator (in the 16th century) of the Old Testament who claimed to translate from the original tongue⁷⁴ leaned heavily on these ^{earlier Italian translations} Even a Jewish translator, David

de' Pomi, who chose to translate into normal Italian a small part of the Bible produced a very different style from that of the Judaeo-Italian texts.⁷⁵

Differences in the kind of works included in the Judaeo-Italian texts may be attributable not only to the kind of reader envisaged but also to the purpose for which these texts were prepared; for although the source of their style lay in their didactic origins, several features of the Siddurim, for instance, show that these were intended for adult recitation as a liturgical work and not for child study. Certain rubrics speak of recitation.⁷⁶ And the prefaces to the Tefillot Latine and the Tefillot Vulgar speak unequivocally of "dire la sua tefillot latine". The care with which some texts are furnished with the methegh to indicate the tonic accent - clearly an aid to rapid reading in recitation - shows that the text was intended to be read aloud.

The Hebrew titles in some of the MSS. may have served to indicate the place in the service being conducted in Hebrew. Apart from this there were certain festivals, particularly Purim, where it was customary to sing songs or poems in the vernacular; and the inclusion of the Elegy in the Machzor as a Kinah for the 9th of Ab makes it clear that it was sung in the middle of the otherwise Hebrew service. The 16th century kinah for the victims of Ancona was of the same nature.⁷⁷ Indeed there seems to have been something of a tradition in the Marche-Abruzzi region for the recitation of a poem in the vernacular on the 9th of Ab. And it is significant that this is the area, as will be seen from chapter V, which the linguistic evidence indicates as the source of many of the Judaeo-Italian texts.

It cannot be assumed that these conditions and intentions apply also to the translations of the Bible, for no manuscripts of a comparable completeness or elegance have ever come to light; one manuscript (K) is extremely

rough in format and may well have been made by a pupil to use as a sort of school 'crib'.⁷⁸ The very careful and elegant format of the Elegy, undoubtedly intended for public use, is also noteworthy. No Judaeo-Italian Bible translations were ever printed, as against three complete editions of the Siddur. One 16th century ^{Pentateuch} ~~translation~~ in manuscript⁷⁹ has a translation and commentary, (the latter in Hebrew), making it clear that the translation was not intended for recitation but simply as an aid to study of the text, as was the commentary. Moreover the small format of the letters would militate against use for recitation. The glossaries were clearly intended for the learner in the classroom as the title of the well-known Magré Dardege indicates.⁸⁰

In connection with this translating activity the Talmud is frequently quoted in order to establish rabbinic precept as far as permission to translate was concerned. Although certain passages⁸¹ seem at first sight to be highly applicable, on closer examination they appear to be too remote to have any but the vaguest effect on conditions in Italy in the late Middle Ages. The languages that the Talmud authors had in mind were certainly not Italian and there is no sign in our translations of the careful distinctions made in the Talmud between which parts of the liturgy may be translated and which not. Indeed Italian practice, especially literary or scribal, often diverged remarkably from precepts laid down by rabbinic tradition even in such an important matter as the rules for copying codices of the Torah.⁸²

A specific illustration from one of our texts may suffice: in the Mishna, (Sotah, 7.1) we find that the Shema may be translated into any language, but the scribe of text B seems to take the diametrically opposite view; for, although there is very little normal Hebrew in this MS., it has the Shema in Hebrew, without a translation⁸³ - presumably because the scribe considered

it too sacred to be translated.

Similar arguments militate against seeing too many parallels between the Targumim and the Judaeo-Italian translations of the Bible. For the Targumim were intended and used for public recitation by an official translator, the Meturgeman. The Judaeo-Italian translations of the Bible give no evidence of this kind of intent; indeed, as we have seen, their source and function must in many cases have been much more modest. There is no indication of any kind of official translator of this kind having existed in Italy, although sermons were usually delivered in Italian, despite the fact that they were later written down in Hebrew.⁸⁴

Hence, the dominant reason for the production of these texts is the desire to educate or, at least, provide for the unlearned. The didactic bias of the Judaeo-Italian texts in general is emphasised by the inclusion of a translation of the Moreh Nebuchim, Maimonides's Guide for the Perplexed, among the few non-liturgical works known in Judaeo-Italian translation.

The impetus to provide texts of this kind for the less learned seems to have produced the greatest fruits in the 15th and 16th centuries. The culmination of this educative activity in Jewish society may be seen in the attempt to establish a Jewish University with an ambitious programme of secular and religious studies at Modena in 1564.⁸⁵ All this was undoubtedly a sign of a flourishing culture and the Judaeo-Italian texts cannot be considered a decadent form of literary production, as at first sight they might appear. For they constitute a production destined for the culturally lowest class of Jewish society and a concern for the education of these can only be afforded when conditions are generally favourable. This seems to be the first major reason for the decline of this kind of literature after the sixteenth century.

However, another major factor must have been the wider diffusion of literary Italian (as a result of the introduction of printing and the firm establishment of Italian as a literary language in the sixteenth century) amongst the Italian population and hence also amongst the Jews. For by the 18th century even an uneducated Jewish woman could be expected to understand normal Italian, as we can see from the preface to Romanelli's translation of the Siddur where he says that he has made the translation "...segnatamente per il sesso femminile afinche l'intelligenza di ciocchè esprimono interessasse maggiormente il cuore alla divozione."⁸⁶

Notes to Chapter II

1. Un hymne sabbatique..., cit. vol. LXXX, pp. 61-2.
2. *ibid.* p. 62.
3. e.g. in the case of the Elegia of the 12th century, reluctance to use the Latin alphabet may well have been a factor as this poem is inserted in a Machzor (the complete cycle of prayers for synagogue use) otherwise entirely in Hebrew. (The Elegia is discussed in greater detail in cap. V below). On the other hand it should be borne in mind that the Judaeo-Italian texts also include medical and philosophical works where this element of respect can have played no part.
4. Roth does not give any concrete examples or actual evidence for his conclusions.
5. See cap. V below.
6. Three (probably four) editions in the sixteenth century.
7. See M. Soave, Dei Soncino, celebri tipografi italiani nei sec. XV e XVI, con elenco delle opere da essi date alla luce, Venice, 1878, pp. 13, 44.
8. *ibid.* p. 44.

9. ibid. p. 13.

10. ibid. pp. 43-49.

11. Issued by Paul IV on July 12, 1555 and entitled Cum nimis absurdum, it introduced a long series of harsh measures against the Jews in the Papal States. See bibliography in A. Milano, Storia degli Ebrei in Italia, Turin, 1963, p. 247.

12. Un hymne..., cit. pp. 61-2.

13. See Alcune note ebraiche di contabilità del sec. XVI in Riv. Is. VIII,(1911) p. 55.

14. I reproduce Cassuto's translation exactly, but it should be noted that, just as the novem. in the first line, the only abbreviation which Cassuto, strangely, does not expand, is abbreviated in the original, so this word is written scu. ('ןן) in the original text.

15. zener in the original.

16. mese. in the original.

17. France. in the original.

18. Un registro ebraico di pegni del sec. XV in ZHB XV (1912) p. 183.

19. The literature on censorship of Hebrew books is extensive. For bibliography see W. Popper, Censorship of Hebrew Books, New York, 1899.

 20. A good example is a page from the Sefer Hahasidim (Bologna, 1538 - the same place and time as the Tefilloth Latine!) reproduced in C. Bernheimer, Paleografia ebraica, Florence, 1924, pl. 12, opposite p. 174.

 21. See A. Vacari^c, La lettura della Bibbia alla vigilia della Riforma Protestante in his Scritti di erudizione e di filologia vol. II, Rome, 1958 pp. 377 - 90; in particular pp. 378-80. Also I. Carini, Le versioni della Bibbia in volgare italiano, S. Pier d'Arena, 1894, pp. 4-11.

 22. F. 170b. On f. 170a there is another censor's signature of 1555. There are no signs of erasures in the MS.

 23. e.g. A. Monteverdi, Testi volgari italiani dei primi tempi, Modena, 1948 (2nd ed.), pp. 34-37.

 24. G. Lazzeri, Antologia..., cit. p. 50, explains the use of Greek characters thus: "... in caratteri greci, certamente per un estremo ossequio all'uso di compilare in greco gli atti sia pubblici che privati, introdotto in Sardegna dalla dominazione bizantina..."
- Other vernacular texts in Greek characters were produced in Sicily and Calabria. See A. Pagliaro, Saggi di critica semantica, Messina-Florence, 1953, pp. 281-330. Of particular interest are pp. 284-6 on the reasons for the use of Greek characters.

25. The whole question is dealt with in M. Mieses, Die Gesetze der Schriftgeschich^tte, Vienna-Leipzig, 1919. The use of the Hebrew alphabet for various languages is dealt with on pp. 108-146, not without some unfortunate misprints (the Mabré Dardege printed 1448!), and for Italian on pp. 115-17.

26. The Alphabet, London, [1947], p. 285.

27. See Jew. Enc. vol. IX p. 610.

28. See below cap. IV.

29. On Nathan ben Jechiel see Jew. Enc. vol. IX, pp. 180-3.

30. See C. Bernheimer, Paleografia ebraica, cit., p. 157. For an example of this type of dating see the account books quoted above.

31. The literary aspects of these texts are discussed in A. Viscardi, Le origini, Milan, 1957, pp. 549-553.

32. The four sonnets are reproduced in A.F. Massera, Sonetti burleschi e realistici dei primi due secoli, Bari, 1920, vol. I, pp. 145-7; bibliography in vol. II, pp. 93-4. A recent edition of the frottola may be found in Spongano, Nozioni ed esempi di metrica italiana, Bologna, 1966, pp. 185-192. For a good account of Manoello's participation in the literary movements of his day, at the same time pinpointing his originality, see M. Marti, Cultura e stile nei poeti giocosi del tempo di Dante, Pisa, 1953, pp. 175-6.

33. On the other hand, Blondheim attempts to trace continuous use of two Hebrew signs from Latin to Romance, with little success. (See Les parlers judéo-romans..., cit., p. CXXVII.)

34. See cap. IV, below.

35. Glosses et glossaires..., cit., p. 156.

36. The more complex phonetic problems involved in representing Old French in Hebrew characters make it necessary to adopt more artificial conventions when writing French than when writing Italian. Hence these can more easily be traced, e.g. the Hebrew alphabet offers no obvious way of writing the Old French ch, and a special sign, ^ʋץ was adopted for this which is so much an artificial convention that its use is a clear indication of the dependence of one text on another. (See A. Darmesteter, Deux élégies..., cit., p. 459, where the system of transcription is given.)

37. See Jew. Enc., vol. IX, pp. 180-1.

38. C. Trasselli, Sulla diffusione degli ebrei e sull'importanza della cultura e della lingua ebraica in Sicilia, particolarmente in Trapani e in Palermo, nel secolo XV, in Boll. Sic., II (1954) pp. 376-382.

39. *ibid.*, p. 377.

40. Una versione italiana..., cit., p. 310. This statement is all the more extraordinary as the text he is discussing dates from the first years of the seventeenth century, by which time many Jews had a full secular as well as religious

education, as the introductory remarks of the translator himself show.

41. For the intercourse between Jewish and Christian scholars at one important centre in the late 15th century see the excellent chapter by Cassuto entitled Gli ebrei nella cerchia degli umanisti e gli studi ebraici degli eruditi fiorentini in his Gli Ebrei a Firenze nell'età del Rinascimento, Florence, 1918. pp.273-327.

42. *ibid.* p. 287.

43. *ibid.* p. 290, n.7.

44. Migliorini, Storia della lingua italiana, Florence, 1963, p. 257.

45. Cassuto, Gli Ebrei a Firenze..., *cit.*, p. 302.

46. Text published by C. Roth, The Memoirs of a Siennese Jew (1625-1633), in HUCA, V(1928) pp. 353-402.

47. This work is discussed below, cap. V.

48. See M. Waxman, A History of Jewish Literature, New York, 1930, vol.II, pp. 72-74.

49. *ibid.* p. 76.

50. See N. Ferorelli Gli Ebrei nell'Italia meridionale dall'età romana al secolo XVIII, Turin , 1915, p. 102.
51. Bernheimer, Paleografia ebraica, cit., pp. 29-30.
52. Historia dei Riti Ebraici, Vita e Osservanze degli Hebrei di Questi Tempi, Paris, 1637, Venice 1638.
53. Un hymne sabbatique..., cit., p. 67.
54. See Milano, Storia..., cit. pp. 613-18.
55. See D.W. Amram, The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy, Philadelphia, 1909, p.32.
56. E. Gamoran, Changing concepts in Jewish Education, New York, 1924, vol.I, p. 121.
57. ibid. p. 93. The length of time taken to acquire this modest skill is partly attributable to the method of teaching which insisted on the names of the letters and vowels as a first step, forming rather a barrier than a help, as one can well imagine.
58. Quoted in full below, p. 194.
59. f.235 b.
60. f. 147 b.

61. The printer Cornelio Adelkind writes (1545) that there was little for pious young women (vrumen Bachuros) to read and so he asked Elia Levita, the famous Biblical scholar who taught Hebrew in Italy, to translate several books, including the Psalms, into Yiddish. (See Amram, The Makers of Hebrew Books... cit., p. 186) Levita himself at one point calls Yiddish Lashon weiber. (See G.E. Weil, Elie Léville, humaniste et massorète, Leiden, 1963, p. 172.)
62. Un ignoto episodio..., cit., p. 262.
63. See especially Les traductions..., cit., pp. 260-2.
64. For details see cap. V, below. And see the reproductions on p.⁵⁷ and p.¹³¹.
65. The Psalms and Meghilloth seem to have been particular favourites to judge from the MSS. known.
66. Such a MS. is B.M. Or. 2736. For an exact description see G. Margoliouth, Catalogue..., cit., vol. II, p. 210. (no. 617).
67. As information on the whereabouts, contents, etc. of Judaeo-Italian works is frequently conflicting and difficult to check, only a rough estimate can be made. This gives something like 65 translations (including glossaries) and 12 original compositions.
68. See Gamoran, Changing concepts...cit., p. 94.

69. See A. Milano, Il Ghetto di Roma, Rome, 1964, p. 386.

70. See cap.V, below.

71. e.g. in Il libro di Amos..., cit., p. 25. But see cap. V below for a further discussion of this theory.

72. T.W. Slotki, Key to the Siddur, A Grammatical Guide to the Hebrew Text of the Principal Prayers, London, 1947, p.6.

73. See C.A. Mastrelli La tecnica delle traduzioni della Bibbia nell'alto medioevo, in La Bibbia nell'alto Medioevo (Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, vol. X) Spoleto, 1963, pp. 657-681, especially p. 668: "il più completo "ossequio" al testo sacro, ossequio il quale, prima ancora nell'impegno dell'interpretazione, si manifesta nel tradurre il più possibile parola per parola... e nel mantenere il più possibile lo stesso ordine che le parole occupavano nel testo originale," and "Ma oltre al freno della "sacralità" che è tipico di ogni linguaggio religioso, il pedissequo mantenimento dello stesso ordine e, se è possibile, della stessa quantità di parole, nelle traduzioni della Bibbia, deve..." etc.

Very similar characteristics are apparent in the old Latin translations, although here the possibility of Jewish influence or participation cannot be completely ruled out, which, however, Boscherini thinks unlikely. (See S. Boscherini, Sulla lingua delle primitive versioni Latine dell'Antico Testamento in Atti dell'Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere 'La Colombaria', XXVI (1961-2) pp. 207-29).

74. La Bibbia quale contiene i Sacri Libri del Vecchio Testamento tradotti nuovamente da la hebraica verità in lingua toscana per Antonio Brucioli etc., Venice, 1532.

75. נחנח L'Ecclesiaste Novamente dal testo hebraico nel volgare Italiano tradotto dall'eccellente physico M. Davit De' Pomi Hebreo....etc., Venice, 1571.

E.g. his translation begins thus (it is interlinear with the Hebrew text):

"Parole de l'Ecclesiaste figliuolo di David, Re in Hierusalem. Vanità delle vanità, disse l'Ecclesiaste, vanità delle vanità ogni cosa è vanità. Che avanza l'uomo di tutta la fatica sua che sostiene sotto al Sole? Habitatore parte, et habitatore viene, e la terra stà in eterno. Il Sole nasce e s'asconde, mira al suo luogo et ivi egli risplende".

76. e.g. text B, f. 43a "E questo se dice cantanno", etc.

77. Published by C. Roth, Un'elegia giudeo-italiana sui martiri d'Ancona, cit.

78. Similar very literal translations are known in normal Italian deriving from school teaching of Latin. (See A. Tobler, Il 'Panfilo' in antico veneziano col latino a fronte, in AGI X(1886-8) pp. 177-255). See Plate I, p. 57.

79. Bodleian Library Mich. Add. 1a. See A. Neubauer Cat. of Hebrew MSS. in the B.L. and in the College Libraries of Oxford, Oxford 1886, vol.I col.8.

80. "Teacher of children".

81. e.g. Jerusalem Talmud, Meg. 4.1

Babylonian Talmud, Meg. 1.8

Mishna, Meg. 4.4-6, 10; Sota 7.1

82. So much so that C. Bernheimer (in Catalogo dei Mss. orientali della Biblioteca Estense, Rome, 1960, p.19) considers non-observance of the rules (e.g. a space of four lines between one book and the next) in a fifteenth century codex of the Pentateuch proof that it was written in Italy.

83. f. 23a.

84. See L. Della Torre, In qual lingua si predicò in Italia ne' tempi passati? in Scritti Sparsi, Padova, 1908, vol. II, pp. 238-245.

85. See M. Güdeman, Ein Projekt zur Gründung einer jüdischen Universität aus dem 16. Jahrhundert, in Festschrift... A. Berliner, Frankfurt, 1903, pp. 164-175.

Greater success was achieved - but on a somewhat less ambitious scale - in founding a Jewish Studium generale in Sicily in 1466 (See Milano, Storia... cit., p. 622) and a "Studio d'Hebrei" in Ferrara in 1556. (See A. Balletti, Gli Ebrei e gli Estensi, Reggio-Emilia, 1930^{p. 96.})

86. Orazioni Ebraiche..., cit., p. V.

CHAPTER III

The Pronunciation of Hebrew in Italy

The pronunciation of Hebrew in Italy is an important factor in a discussion of the language of the Judaeo-Italian texts because it is essential to be sure that what may be considered dialect traits are not merely misinterpretations of the method of transcription. To take it for granted that we know what, in each case, the combination of Hebrew symbols was intended to represent, is a valid assumption and may have no untoward consequences when the language is definitely known, as in the case of literary Italian; for once the Italian word in the Hebrew script is recognised, the inadequacies or ambiguities of the transcription can be compensated for by one's knowledge of literary Italian. However, when the language is by no means certain - and, by common consent, the language of many of the Judaeo-Italian texts does not correspond in all respects to any known Italian language or dialect - such an assumption can often be misleading.

None of the works mentioned above examines in detail the sound values attributed to the Hebrew characters; and, indeed, Berenblut does not even consider it necessary to discuss the system of transcription of the texts he examines. Yet if only one example is considered, the importance of examining Hebrew pronunciation in Italy becomes clear. A reader familiar with the Ashkenazi or the Sephardi pronunciation of taw

(s, q or t) would not guess at its value in Italian pronunciation, where it quite frequently has the sound d; yet this turns out to be a significant element in explaining one of the most puzzling terms met with in the Judaeo-Italian texts.

The starting point, then, for an examination of the system of transcription is to determine the sounds usually attributed to the Hebrew characters in Italy.

Works on the classical pronunciation of Hebrew abound, but, as no complete history of the Hebrew language yet exists, there is little information available on the pronunciation of Hebrew in Italy in past centuries, although Artom has given a fairly detailed account of the traditional pronunciation used in the recent past.¹

Material for an extensive study of the subject can be found in the many grammars of Hebrew composed in Italy, in Latin works which quote the titles and parts of Hebrew works, and in many other documents,² but there is no place here for a large-scale examination. I have selected only a few representative works, all of which explain or transcribe the Hebrew signs in terms of Italian pronunciation, in order to establish a basic range of possible sound values on which the writers of the Judaeo-Italian texts may have based their transcriptions.³

It is clear from what follows that little chronological development of any consequence is discernible, (except for the qualification on pronunciation in the twentieth century mentioned below.) Indeed, two or more ways of pronouncing the same Hebrew character can be

found in contemporary documents, or even in the same document and are attributable rather to conflict between learned and popular pronunciation or regional influences, than to chronological factors. This applies particularly to grammarians who tend to put forward what they consider "correct" pronunciation instead of the current pronunciation.⁴

Given this constancy of Hebrew pronunciation in Italy throughout the centuries, "modern traditional" pronunciation⁵ has been taken as a starting point, because the modern period is methodically and securely documented⁶ through Artom's article. However, I have preferred to draw also on older sources in order to embrace possible variations and cover a wide period of time. For every symbol, the modern values have been compared with the older sources, and, in suitable instances, with modern sources of a popular regional type.

Little space has been devoted to symbols which present no ambiguities, or those which rarely occur in the Judaeo-Italian texts.

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Consonants

1. 'Aleph \aleph in modern traditional pronunciation has no sound value although there is a tendency in Tuscany to double the consonant ending a closed syllable preceding an 'aleph.

absence of sound value

All the older sources concur in this⁷, although some grammarians feel a need to make a gesture towards what was, probably, in Classical and medieval Spanish pronunciation, a glottal stop. E.g. Calimani⁷ writes Homan for $\aleph \aleph$ but this is simply a learned device and does not represent popular pronunciation, for on p.3 he includes 'aleph among the letters which "sono alle volte mute, nè si esprimono punto nelle parole, in cui sono, tanto quanto non vi fossero,..."; and he uses \aleph to illustrate the vowels, without attributing any value to it:⁸ \aleph A, \aleph E etc.

The same applies to Franchi, who perhaps sums up the whole matter of the pronunciation of 'aleph in Italy:⁹

"...e se bene secondo la sua propria natura si dovrebbe pronuntiare con l'aspiratione: l'vso nondimeno quotidiano fa, che ella si pronuntij secondo la vocale, che l'è sotto:..."

which means that it is not pronounced at all in the more usual pronunciation.

2. Beth \beth The modern traditional pronunciation was, in principle, $\beth = \underline{v}$, and $\beth = \underline{b}$. However, in Leghorn it was usually pronounced b in both cases, though this is perhaps due to the influence of the Sephardim, considering the origin of the Jewish community of

Leghorn.¹⁰ In Piedmont there was a popular tendency to pronounce ɔ at the end of a word as "u semiconsonantica...Così ganabh = ganau".¹¹ Moreover, throughout Italy, an initial ɔ or ɔ tended to be pronounced b.

There is, however, some indication that in past centuries at least, the weakening of a final ɔ was not confined to Piedmont, for we find Rautuu twice for ɔ and diure (ɔ at the end of a syllable) in Grossi's transliteration;¹² although he otherwise has v for ɔ; and Franchi, although he gives the values ɔ = b, ɔ = v, adds "e quando non ha punto dentro, nè altro punto, che sia vocale, vale come una, u,"¹³ posta nel dittongo, come ɔ hau".

The Livornese pronunciation of ɔ as b at the end of a word is found also in Romanelli, e.g. vejattsib, which must be due to Sephardi influence to judge from the title of his work.¹⁴

Moreover, Bedarida goes so far as to state that ɔ is always pronounced b in popular Livornese pronunciation.¹⁵

3. Gimel ɔ From modern sources, the traditional pronunciation is seen to be simply "g dura".¹⁶ This is also the value in all the other sources, although Franchi has a long and very involved explanation which, if I have succeeded in following him, derives simply from the double value of the letter g in Italian; however, it is worth noting that he adds that "quando poi la detta ɔ, Ghimel non ha Daghe's, vale meza g,"¹⁷ which seems however to be only the pronunciation of the learned.

4. Daleth Ṭ All sources give d; Franchi indicates that Ṭ = d or dd depending on the type of daghesh, forte or lene. Without daghesh, it is "lighter" than d "come, Ṭ, dha,"¹⁸.
5. He ḥ This was not pronounced in modern traditional pronunciation except by the very correct who attempted a slight aspiration for he with mappiq (which has little relevance for the Judaeo-Italian texts).

The learned are keen to give the letter some transliteration especially when it begins a word, and we find Hallel in Romanelli; but as h has no sound in Italian, this was probably only a graphic device. In Fiorentino¹⁹ we find the odd-looking Vai for ḥḥ; and this seems to be the usual pronunciation for, throughout the eight stanzas of transliteration of Grossi's song, ḥ is not represented by any symbol at all.

6. Waw Ṿ In modern traditional pronunciation, it usually had the value v at the beginning of a syllable, but in Piedmont and N.E. Italy, it was generally pronounced u at the end of a syllable.

This would explain the common Italian spelling of the letter as vau rather than waw or vav (cf. Modern Hebrew vav and Ashkenazi Hebrew vov). Moreover, this seems to be the common pronunciation in earlier centuries, for Grossi always transliterates the common Hebrew conjunction Ṿ (which always occurs at the beginning of a word) as ve; and he has v also at the beginning of a syllable,

e.g. veched vadenu for וֶכֶד וָדֵנּוּ and ched vâ for כֶּד וָ ; but we find u for ו at the end of a word, e.g. iadcau for יָדְעָו .

However, this is the only time a final waw occurs in the poem and we must turn to Franchi who has more to say on the subject, for the value of this letter is an important element in interpreting the language of certain Judaeo-Italian texts.

In the table of the alphabet on p. 10, he gives the value as u consonante (which means modern v) and the name of the letter as Vàu ו , and later, Tàu ו . This is not very conclusive because of the unfortunate ambivalence of v and u. However, his explanation on p. 18 ultimately confirms this value, although it needs some elucidation:

"La ו , Vàu, quando ha una vocale con esso lei, si pronuntia come la, V, consonante, come, וֶ , vâ; e quando non l'ha (intendete però, quando si legge, e si tira à se; e non quando stà in qualche dittione otiosa, senza far nulla, come dichiareremo) uale come la, U, vocale, come וֹ , Tàu".

This I take to mean that waw followed by a vowel = v, without a vowel = u; this excludes the special cases of Cholem and shureq (where the waw has no sound value of its own). He goes on to distinguish ו from $\text{וּ$ and makes the significant observation:

"Ma questo non è osservato da tutti gli studiosi della lingua Hebrea; che il vulgo, non pone cura à tante differenze..."

7. Zayin ז Artom gives Northern Italy s dolce (i.e. \hat{s}), Central-Southern Italy z dolce (i.e. $\hat{d}s$).
8. Cheth ח All sources give more or less the same sound: "un'h

aspirata con molta forza".²⁰

9. Teth ט Franchi states: "vale assolutamente come la, t, nostra"; and all the other sources concur.
10. Yodh י Pronounced as a consonantal i (i.e. as in iato). However, everywhere except in Piedmont, there was a tendency to eliminate the consonantal value of the letter when followed by the vowel i in an initial syllable, thus: yigdal = igdal. Whilst in N.E. Italy, there was a popular tendency to pronounce this as "g dolce".²¹

These developments find some confirmation in older sources.

Romanelli has Iotser for example, but Igdal, Istabbac. Franchi gives its value as i consonante,²² but mentions that some pronounce it g, which he makes clear is a popular pronunciation to be avoided.²³

11. Kaph כ כ = k and כ = cheth. All sources concur, although Artom mentions a tendency for the plosive sound to predominate at the beginning of a word and there are some signs of this fluctuation in the older sources. This has little importance for the Judaeo-Italian texts.
12. Lamed ל,¹³ Mem מ,¹⁴ Nun נ. All sources give the values l, m, and n respectively.
15. Samech ס All sources give the value s (unvoiced), but Artom indicates that in Tuscany and adjoining areas a samech in an intervocalic position was pronounced as a voiced s.
16. 'Ayin ע Most sources indicate a strong velar nasal, and write the

letter ngain - "non si può esprimere meglio di così".²⁴ Franchi in a valiant attempt at explaining the sound says "quasi che si strangola".²⁵ Thus it is usually represented by ng e.g. Seemang, Ngamidà, Ngalenu, Ngolam²⁶ or, occasionally, by h (which, however, seems to represent the same sound, for Fiorentino uses both h and ng e.g. Holam and Scemang).

Bedarida²⁷ contrasts the Livornese "ngh, press'a poco" with the Roman ngk (which finds confirmation in Del Monte's sonnets e.g. ngkolàm²⁸) and with the pronunciation gn "altrove in Italia".

Artom mentions this latter pronunciation as popular in N.E. Italy; and Grossi's constant transliteration of 'ayin as n e.g. ᵐᵃᵈᵘᵃᵇ maduan, ᵐᵃᵈᵘᵃᵇ lenolam, may well represent the palatal n (ñ).

17. Pe ᵈ ᵈ = p and ᵈ = f, but Artom mentions that, as with beth and kaph, in an initial position it tended to have the plosive value, i.e. p whether it had the daghesh or not.²⁹
18. Zade ז The modern traditional pronunciation in Piedmont and Central-Southern Italy was like Italian z dura (i.e. ts), and s in N.E. Italy. The latter was also a popular (and probably older) pronunciation in Piedmont.³⁰

The affricative pronunciation is by far the more common in older sources. Romanelli writes Iotser, vejattsib, Fiorentino has Razon and Calimani calls the letter Tzade. Franchi, having

explained that it should be pronounced as the z in zio etc., and carefully distinguished from zayin, goes on to combat, at some length, the opinion that it should be pronounced s, ending his remarks:

"Il che anche si prova per l'uso odierno, il quale la pronuntia nel modo da noi insegnato: come si potrà vedere facendola pronuntiare da Gli Hebrei dotti".³¹

This seems to indicate that s was an alternative, possibly more popular, pronunciation at the time.

19. Qoph פ, 20. Resh ר All sources give the values k and r respectively.
21. Shin ש Gumpertz states that in the early Middle Ages there was no difference between the pronunciation of shin and sin, both being pronounced s;³² and as the distinction has some importance for the Judaeo-Italian texts, it warrants closer examination.

This lack of differentiation seems to have existed in Spain in the Middle Ages (at least in the Moorish part).³³ Moreover, in a broadside in Catalan issued in Valencia in 1512, asking for the denunciation of Crypto-Jews, the latter are described as celebrating certain Holy days, including "Tissabay" and "Rossessena";³⁴ and the results of shin = s can be found also in modern Judaeo-Spanish.³⁵

However, the distinction seems usually to have been more clearly maintained in Italy; although we find, in Romanelli, for

instance, spellings such as Nismat and Cadis. However, he also has Rascè codascim, Scemang and le sciabbeah. The first two can probably be accounted for by the difficulty of expressing ś before a consonant or at the end of a word, in ordinary Italian spelling, as it can only be represented by sc + e or i. This is born out by Fiorentino, who writes Ros hodes, but also Rosc codes, the second form being apparently a sporadic attempt to represent the sound of shin. Sephardi influence, however, may play some part in the hesitations of Romanelli and Fiorentino.

The characteristics of Italian spelling also account for some of the oddities of Grossi's representation of shin. Grossi distinguishes the two letters in the first part of the poem, e.g. scievach and bessim, but later seems to get entangled in the complexities of the Italian trigramme, for he has iesculam etc. where sc is obviously intended to be read ś, for sk is certainly not intended; and if he had pronounced the shin as a sin, he would have written simply s.

We find shin clearly indicated in popular Roman pronunciation of Hebrew, e.g. Del Monte has rasciangkim < Hebrew resha'.³⁶

Naturally, the grammarians, such as Franchi and Calimani, clearly distinguish the two letters.

22. Taw ן Both t and d occur quite frequently as the value of this letter and Bederida considers t the Sephardi pronunciation of

Leghorn and d the pronunciation of the rest of Italy. However, Grossi consistently transcribes h as t but h as d. This popular differentiation is, in part unwittingly, confirmed by Franchi. He gives the value of h as t and h as e, and then continues: "quantunque alcuni Hebrei non f'accino questa differenza e pronunzino la h, Taù, senza il Daghès come la d; la qual cosa non fanno i dotti".³⁷ However, in the Table at the end of Book I, he gives the name of one of the Hebrew vowels as pathach but slips into what must have been the more common pronunciation, padach, on p. 28. Calimani probably sums up the situation of the popular pronunciation without daghesh:

"...s'esprimerà...la h secondo gli Ebrei d'Italia come D, e secondo gli Ebrei Germani come e greco Th. Gli Ebrei oriundi delle Spagne non notano in tal lettera alcuna differenza per detto puntino, e la pronunziano sempre come I semplice".³⁸

Vowels

Only the vowels which are found in Judaeo-Italian texts are here considered, so that the Chateph vowels, for example, are not discussed.

Pathach * and Qamez * . All sources indicate a as the value for both these vowels.

It is significant that this identity of pronunciation of pathach and qamez is so constant in all Sephardi and Italian pronunciation that the error in pointing, found in many Hebrew texts, of confusing one of these signs with the other is taken by one scholar as a sure sign of the Italian or Spanish origin of a Hebrew text.³⁹

The distinction of Qamez chatuf as o seems to have been observed, with some exceptions, in Italy, e.g. Franchi: "chochmà e non chachmà";⁴⁰ but this value of Qamez, depending as it does on the whole structure of the Hebrew word correctly pointed, can hardly affect the Judaeo-Italian texts.

Seghol * and Zere * . All sources give e for both these vowels without any sign that they are distinguished. Franchi says both are pronounced as "e stretta".⁴¹

Shewa * . A clear distinction existed between vocal shewa and silent shewa, more or less on the principles of classical pronunciation. The details of this distinction are not relevant here, nor are the values given to composite shewa.

However, vocal shewa seems to have had the value of a full vowel and is always transcribed e like seghol and zere, e.g. Grossi: lechevrà for לֶחֶבֶר. Franchi gives it as "e larga" and Calimani: "fà il suo ufficio di E".⁴³

Artom mentions a popular pronunciation in Piedmont which often omitted the vocal shewa, hence: "brakhà per berakhà".

Chireq * All sources give the value i.

Cholem י or * All sources give the value o.

Shureq ו and Qibbuz * All sources give the value u for both signs, without any distinction. Artom, however, mentions that in the nineteenth century this vowel was pronounced ü (come la u francese') in Piedmont.⁴⁴

Other Signs

Daghesh forte and Rapheh In modern traditional pronunciation, daghesh forte was usually pronounced as a double consonant in the Tuscan and Roman areas, but not in Northern Italy (Piedmont and Veneto).⁴⁵

The Hebrew loan-words used in giudeo-romanesco clearly show this gemination e.g. dibburìmmi < Heb. dibburim, cheillà < Heb. gehillàh.⁴⁶ A transliteration of the Benedictions to be recited in the synagogue,⁴⁷ although modern, shows the traditional Florentine pronunciation of daghesh forte. All the consonants bearing it are carefully doubled in the transcription e.g. Adonai immachem, ammeverach, a'ammim (אָאָמִיִם), attorà (אָטוֹרָא). There is, however, barely a double consonant (and then it does not correspond to a daghesh) in the whole of the eight stanzas of the transliteration of Grossi's song.

Franchi equates daghès chazàc with gemination,⁴⁸ and it seems that rapheh was simply an absence of a daghesh and not represented by any diacritical sign, for he says of it:

"non s'usa più, quando si vuol dire la tal lettera non ha il Dagheh si dice ha il Rafè".⁴⁹

Accentuation and final consonants The sources where tonic accent is indicated, generally follow the massoretic system, and this is carried into the loan-words used in popular speech (compare giudeo-livornese sciemmàsh⁵⁰ with Yiddish shàmes "attendant, beadle"; the Italian pronunciation berachà with Yiddish bròche "blessing").

Artom states that in Central and Southern Italy, final

consonants were usually followed by an e and the consonant was doubled, thus davarre (= dabhar).⁵¹ This, of course, is not usually shown in grammars or transcriptions as being quite obviously "incorrect", but it is a frequent occurrence in the Hebrew words which have entered giudeo-romanesco, e.g. sciabbàdde,⁵² chanuccòdde,⁵³ berachòdde,⁵⁴ ngkolamme.⁵⁴

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It is not surprising to find the influence of the sounds of the Italian language on the pronunciation of Hebrew, e.g. the weakening of aspirates, i.e. the complete disappearance of the sound value of He; there are also signs (not discussed above) of a tendency for cheth to be pronounced either k or h. Moreover, a typically Italian evolution can be seen in the tendency for yodh to be pronounced ġ.

What is striking is the extent of regional variation attributable, not so much to the kind of linguistic differentiation which geographical and political separation usually entail, (the regions here considered, centring round Piedmont, Venice, Tuscany and Rome⁵⁵, each formed part of a different sovereign state throughout most of the period under consideration) as to the influence of the phonetic structure of the local Italian dialects. The Venetian pronunciation of zayin and zade as voiced and unvoiced s, as opposed to the values dš and ts further South; the Tuscan gemination of consonants before an 'aleph and as the expression of a daghesh forte, as opposed to the single consonants in these positions further North; the Tuscan and Roman treatment of final consonants (cf. the Tuscan pronunciations tramme, busse and even Bramse for tram, bus, Brahms), compared with the lack of any such development further North (many Emilian dialects have a large number of words ending in consonants - cf. Bolognese arcôlt "raccolto", armasd "mescolanza"); the Tuscan voicing of samech when intervocalic; the Piedmontese pronunciation of shureq and gibbuz as a

as a Piedmontese ü and the syncopation of vocal shewa; all have exact parallels in local dialect or the local pronunciation of Italian.

Franchi⁵⁶ despairs of describing adequately the sound of certain Hebrew letters:

"...perché nè a me, nè a huomo alcuno credo che basterà mai l'animo d'insegnar bene la pronuntia della ם , He, h, Chèth, e ן , Nghàin, in iscritto".

In so doing, he has pointed out those sounds which are quite alien to the Italian phonetic system. At the same time there are sounds in Italian, such as é, é, l', ñ and the di,hthongs and triphthongs, which are alien to Hebrew and consequently difficult to represent in Hebrew characters.⁵⁷

Here, one more point may be added as a striking confirmation, from a rather unusual source, of one of the values determined above. I. Garbell quotes one peculiar instance of taw written in mistake for deleth (implying a pronunciation d for taw) which occurs in a Hebrew work by a Spanish author. The manuscri t examined, however, is a copy made in Italy.⁵⁸

N O T E S
to Chapter III

1. E.S. Artom, La pronuncia dell'ebraico presso gli Ebrei d'Italia in Scritti in memoria di F. Luzzatto, Città di Castello, 1962, pp. 26-30. Until this article appeared, as the author himself says in his introductory remarks:
"Fra gli studi pubblicati sulla pronuncia tradizionale dell'ebraico presso gli Ebrei dei vari paesi fino alla metà circa di questo secolo, nessuno, a quanto ci consta, ha trattato esaurientemente ed esattamente di quella in uso presso gli Ebrei d'Italia".
2. A Venetian directive of 1553 concerning the banning of the Talmud, and the reply from Candia in 1554 contain words such as Misnagioth, Maghazorini, Arugh, etc. (Both documents reproduced by C. Castellani, Documenti circa la persecuzione dei libri ebraici a Venezia in 'Bibliofilia', VII (1905-6) pp. 304-7.)

The Index Expurgatorius for Hebrew books contains many transliterated Hebrew words, etc.
3. Many promising sources have had to be excluded as unsuitable; the Latin grammars of Hebrew of the early sixteenth century (such as Aldus Manutius' brief Introductio utilissima hebraice discere cupientibus, Venice 1500, which went through twenty-one editions before 1520) tend to be schematic and impose the further barriers of learned theory and the pronunciation of Latin to our obtaining an insight into the Italian Jewish pronunciation of Hebrew. Later writers in the sixteenth century felt the influence of the renowned hebraist Elia Levita who, although he spent much of his life in Italy, had Yiddish as his native language. For these grammars, see F. Rosenthal, The Study of the Hebrew Bible in XVI Century Italy, in Studies in the Renaissance, I, Austin, Texas, 1954, pp. 81-91 (especially p. 86).

A photocopy of Conradus Pellicanus' De modo legendi et intelligendi Hebraeum, obtained with some difficulty, turned out to be useless when I found the reprint described (by E. Nestle,

Tübingen, 1877) as "Deutschland's erstes Lehr-Lese-und Wörterbuch der hebräischen Sprache".

4. e.g. Franchi's account of the value of teth (see below).
5. This is a convenient term for the type of pronunciation described by Artom, in use up to about the turn of the century, before the influence of the pronunciation of other countries began to be imposed, especially through contacts with the State of Israel.
6. Artom's information is based on much first-hand knowledge; written sources have to be carefully interpreted.
7. Grammatica Ebreica spiegata in lingua italiana composta da Simon Calimani, Gran Rabino Veneto ecc., Venice, 1751, p.6 (on Calimani, see Jew. Enc., vol. III, p. 515)
8. Ibid., p.5.
9. G. Franchi, Sole della Lingua Santa nel quale brevemente si contiene là Grammatica Hebraea, Bergamo, 1591, p. 16. Franchi was a Jewish convert to Christianity, born in Rome, where he died c.1600. (See Jew. Enc., vol V, p.473.)
10. This view of Artom's is supported by the evidence of the dominant Sephardi element composing the Leghorn community and particularly the strong Spanish element in the local Jewish speech. On both these points see Bedarida, Ebrei di Livorno, cit., pp.XI-XXI.
11. Artom, op. cit., p.27.
12. Il divertimento de Grandi. Musica da Camera, o per servizio di Tavola... Opera IX Dei [sic] Cavallier Carlo Grossi, Venice 1681. This includes a Hebrew song with a transcription in the Latin alphabet of the complete Hebrew text for the benefit of the singers unfamiliar with Hebrew. Both Hebrew text and transcription are reproduced in N.H. Tur-Sinai, Halashon wehasepher, I, Jerusalem, 1954, pp. 175-181.

13. Op. cit., p.17. In the text this is actually printed v. However, there is some confusion over the use of u and v throughout Franchi's book, (which may be due to the publisher or typesetter) so that at times it becomes very difficult to follow what he means. From his mention of Tolomei on p.22 and p.32, and his spelling, for example, of vniuersale, it is clear that he has tried to adopt in part Tolomei's suggested orthographic reforms. The latter's use of v and u in e.g. his De le lettere, Venice, 1547, seems at first sight quite arbitrary; however, we learn from a brief note at the end of the book (f.235a) that he has used no less than three characters, viz. v (Roman type) for the pure vowel (= modern u), v (Italic type) for the semi-vowel (as in quello), and u for the consonant (= modern v). Franchi, in trying to adopt this system, has brought about complete confusion. As proof that Franchi's is not simply another unexpectedly subtle yet consistent system such as Tolomei's, but simply inconsistency, one example will suffice. On the same page we find the spellings: vale (Roman v), vale (Italic v) and uale! However, in this instance (of the explanation of the value of l), his meaning is clear.
14. Orazioni Ebraiche di rito Spagnuolo cotidiane, del Sabbath e de' novilunj. Traduzione di S. Romanelli, Repubblica Italica, 1802. This early translation of part of the Ritual is not accompanied by the Hebrew text, but many of the prayers have Hebrew titles in Latin characters, a practice later abandoned by the more elegant Italian translations of the nineteenth century, such as those of Luzzatto, (1821), Della Torre (1846) etc.
- On Romanelli see Jew. Enc., vol.X, p. 443.
15. Ebrei di Livorno, cit., p.XXIII.
16. Artom, La pronuncia... cit., p.27.
17. Op. cit., p.17.
18. Ibid., p.17.

19. ^להַשְׁמֵחַ הַיּוֹם Orazioni quotidiane per uso degli Ebrei Spagnoli e Portoghesi tradotte, con l'aggiunta di qualche poetica versione da Salomone Fiorentino, Basilea, [or rather Leghorn] 1802. A similar work to Romanelli's (with very few transcriptions), but it has the Hebrew text also.
20. Del Monte, Sonetti..., cit., p.18.
21. Artom, La pronuncia..., cit., p.28.
22. Op.cit., p.10.
23. Ibid., p.19.
24. Calimani, op. cit., p.1.
25. Op. cit., p.20.
26. Romanelli, op. cit., passim.
27. Ebrei di Livorno, cit., p.XXIII.
28. Sonetti..., cit., p.18.
29. There is little sign of this in the older sources.
30. Artom, La pronuncia..., cit. p. 28.
31. Op. cit., p.22.
32. Mirta'e séfatenu, Jerusàlem, 1953, p.43.
33. I. Garbell, The Pronunciation of Hebrew in Mediaeval Spain, in Homenaje a Millàs Vallicrosa, Barcelona, 1954, vol.I, p.665.
34. A photograph of the document appears in Rosenthal's (Oxford book-

-sellers) catalogue no. 60., n.d. [1963 or 4?] p.79.

35. e.g. sabá for l l l ; see C.M. Crews, Recherches sur le judéo-espagnol dans les pays balkaniques, Paris, 1935, p.247, n.945.
36. Sonetti postumi..., cit., p.252.
37. Op. cit., p.24.
38. Op. cit., p.2.
39. H.M.H. Loewe, Catalogue of the MSS in the Hebrew character collected and bequeathed to Trinity College Library by the late William Aldis Wright, Cambridge, 1926, p.64.
40. Op. cit., p.46.
41. Op. cit., p.32.
42. Op. cit., p.32.
43. Op. cit., p.7.
44. Op. cit., p.29.
45. Artom, La pronuncia..., cit., p.29.
46. Del Monte, Sonetti postumi..., cit., pp.241, 243.
47. This is a booklet entitled Benedizioni che si recitano quando si è chiamati alla lettura della Torà, Florence, n.d. [but recent], provided in some Italian synagogues for those who cannot read the original Hebrew. It contains three parallel texts: the Hebrew, an Italian translation and a transcription in the Latin alphabet which is intended to be read aloud.

48. Op. cit., p.49.
49. Ibid., p.50.
50. Bedarida, Ebrei di Livorno..., cit., p.48.
51. La pronuncia..., cit., p.30.
52. Del Monte, Sonetti..., cit., p.25.
53. Ibid., p.33.
54. Ibid., p.35.
55. The Jewish communities in other parts of Italy (such as Lombardy) are of too recent origin to be considered to have an ⁿidigenous traditional pronunciation of Hebrew. (cf. Artom, La pronuncia..., cit., p.26.)
56. Op. cit., p.21.
57. This is not always taken into account. Weil finds non-existent Venetian traits in certain of Elia Levita's spellings of Italian words in Hebrew characters, e.g. he says that Levita has "panza où le toscan aurait pancia". But the offending consonant is represented by a zade which could equally well represent ts or ć, for how else can one represent ć in Hebrew characters? Zade is, in fact, the commonest symbol used. (See G.E. Weil, Elie Lévíte, humaniste et massorète, Leiden, 1963, p.193.)
58. I. Garbell, The Pronunciation..., cit., p.672.

CHAPTER IV

The Transcription of Italian in Hebrew Characters

From the point of view of the transcription, Judaeo-Italian texts may be divided into two distinct types, those which only use the consonants, and those which also employ vowel points and other diacritical signs. As the latter type constitutes a much more complete system and includes ^{nearly} all the signs used in the purely consonantal system, it is here examined first.

Text C (British Museum, Or. 9626) is a clear and carefully prepared manuscript, which, being fairly typical of the group of fifteenth century prayer book translations which will be discussed later, is here examined in detail in order to serve as a basis for comparison with other texts.

Consonants¹

1. א clearly has no consonantal value but plays an important part in the vowel system (see below).
2. ב occurs in three forms: with and without daghesh, and with rapheh. These three forms do not seem to be consistently distinguished from each other, for we find the same word spelt in two different ways. However, the principle seems to be as follows:

ב represents b , בֿ represents v

This can be deduced because their occurrence corresponds, in the main, to Italian usage, e.g. וִינְגֹוֹ vengo, דִּלִּיבִיבִי delivivi 'dei vivi',² בְּנִידֵטוֹ benedeto, בּוֹנִי boni, although the scribe has in some cases clearly forgotten the rapheh. (See the analogous case of ב below). ב is usually only treated as daghesh forte i.e. bb, e.g. אֲבַנְדוֹנָה abbandona. In the Hebrew words,³ daghesh is usually inserted correctly, although the fact that rapheh is in principle placed over every ל without daghesh reduces the need for careful insertion of the daghesh. Hence we find בְּרִיָּה and בְּרִיָּה etc.

It may be noted here that the begadkaphat letters which occur in the Hebrew words usually have a rapheh to denote the absence of daghesh.

3. ג Represents only the velar Italian g, never the palatal ǰ, e.g. גְּלוֹרִיפִּיקָטוֹ glorefecato. Rapheh occurs after a nasal e.g. in vengo (see above), לִּלְיָנָה lalengua, apparently as a means of indicating the velar n.
4. ד represents d e.g. דִּנּוֹי de noi 'di noi'. The daghesh is found in this letter mainly in the words דֹּמֶדֶת Domedeth and דֵּת Deth 'Dio'. The Rapheh is quite frequent, but as it is confined almost solely to a daleth in intervocalic position, it may imply a fricative sound דִּלְאִי neladhi 'nel giorno'.
5. ה has no consonantal value except in the Hebrew words, but is used for a final a. (See below).
6. ו has its usual double function as consonant and vowel. As a consonant it must represent v for it doubles for וּ with no apparent

difference between the two, as can be seen from comparing the spelling of וִיבִּי vivo with 'delivivi' (see 1 above).

7. ס occurs very rarely, and represents the voiced Italian s (ś). However, it never occurs for the very frequent intervocalic s, although this is a common Italian pronunciation, but stands for the characteristically Italian ś before a voiced consonant e.g. אֶרֶשׁוּלַיְא arešvilja, 'risveglia', (compare samech, below).
8. ח occurs only in Hebrew words in this text.
9. ט represents t as in דֵּלִימוֹרְתִי delimorti, 'dei morti'. Occasionally a daghesh is found in the letter but it is notable that it occurs only where tt would be appropriate, e.g. תְּחַלְחַל tutta (f. 35a, l. 1. and f. 36b, l. 6.)
10. י The exact value of consonantal yodh is difficult to determine. Does יִנְוֹרָגִי represent ienoragii or genoragii? Some scholars in a similar context talk of conservation of i.⁴ But this does not take into account the peculiar difficulty of representing the Italian ǵ or even [3] in Hebrew characters, and the fact that yodh is the closest approximation possible without the use of special signs. On the face of it, יִסְלַוְרָגִי seems to represent esalvarajo rather than esalvaraggio, and יִלֹּגִי lalojia rather than laloggia but one cannot be dogmatic. For the moment, a consonantal yodh will be transcribed j.
11. כ only occurs in Hebrew words.

12. ל represents l e.g. לִיּוּשְׁטִי lijušti, 'i giusti'. Occasionally the daghes is found indicating ll, e.g. אֵלֶּלְךָ aquello, קוֹלְךָ collo, 'con il'.
13. מ represents m, e.g. סֵטֶמָה setema, 'settimana', מִיּוֹ mio.
14. נ represents n, e.g. אֵנְלָגֶרֶמּוֹ enalcaremo. This is sometimes found with daghes, e.g. אֵנְגָנּוֹ enganno, סֵרָנּוֹ seranno. However, the daghes never occurs in grane, 'grande'.
15. ס represents s, e.g. סוּסְפִירוֹ sospiro. An occasional daghes occurs in this letter too, and again corresponds to a double consonant, e.g. כֵּנֶסֶסִי keenessi, 'che in essi' and אֵסָה essa. It is characteristic that only two words after the last example, and on the same line (f.346. 15), we find enesa, (i.e. without dagesh). Samech is also used in every case for intervocalic s, e.g. in misericordia, posavo etc.
16. ׀ occurs only in Hebrew words.
17. פ, On similar lines to ל, פ represents p, e.g. פּוֹסָבּוֹ posavo, סוּסְפִירוֹ sospiro; and פֿ represents f, e.g. פֿוֹרְנִישְׁצֵה fornisce, פֶֿזֶה fece. This, however, is not always consistently observed, but the rapheh never occurs where one would expect p, but is sometimes omitted where f is intended. This is demonstrated by line 10 on f. 33a where we read:

אֵינְפֶרֶה דְּהֵי אֵינְפֶרֶה לִּפְיִי לִיּוּשְׁטִי דְּיִשְׁרָאֵל

enfra demi enfra lifiljoli deJisrael, where the second enfra and filjoli are written with rapheh on the Ḍ but the first enfra is not.

18. Ṣ occurs where Italian has ć, e.g. יִצְחָק caçavo, 'cacciò', יְצִי לִי liçeli, 'i cieli'; but also where Italian has z, e.g. רֶדּוּנָנְצָה redunança, דֵּנָנְצִי denançi. Ṣ is the most appropriate Hebrew letter for Italian z, but there is no Hebrew letter which ^{can} represent ć accurately, and Ṣ is the closest approximation. There is no reason to suppose that only a single sound is represented in the text by Ṣ; some early Italian texts associate the two sounds and even in modern Italian they are often equivalent (pronuncia and pronunzia, beneficio and benefizio). Here ç is used as a convenient, ambivalent transcription.⁵

Daghes occurs, indicating zz in לֵאלֹרְגֵהֶֿעֶֿצֶֿ lalargheççe (40a. 9). There is no sign of a distinction between zeta dolce and zeta aspra.

19. Ḳ represents k e.g. אֶסְכּוֹל asecolo, כֵּי kee "che è". This is one of the few instances where the Hebrew spelling is undoubtedly more efficient than normal Italian, which did not evolve a stable system of spelling this sound until the sixteenth century. Given the completely equal sound value of Italian c, ch and q (in the appropriate context), I have sometimes followed normal

Italian spelling in the transcription.

An occasional daghesh occurs where appropriate, e.g. אָבֻכָּא abucca,
קֵטוֹכָא ketocca.

20. ך represents r e.g. לִיפִּיקוֹרָא lipecora, סוֹפֵרִי sopre.

21. ן As has been seen, Italian pronunciation^{of Hebrew} generally distinguished the pronunciation of shin and sin; however, there remain some rather doubtful cases. The spelling of nostro, questo,^{etc.} with ן, ~~etc.~~ in this text, naturally suggests that it is simply an alternative to ך and equals s.

However, it is ^{evident} ~~clear~~ that the scribe clearly distinguishes between the two letters and uses shin in a very distinct manner. In the Hebrew text, and the Hebrew words occurring in the Italian texts, both letters are usually pointed (correctly), hence satan, shabbad, shamayim, sefadai (שַׁפַּדַּי), nishmad. Sometimes the point is omitted from shin but never from sin (the less common form of the two in Hebrew). Thus the word Jisrael, which occurs very frequently, is always spelt with a pointed sin. ~~Thus~~ The practice^{then} is that shin may or may not be pointed, sin is always pointed.

That the unpointed letter is shin is confirmed by certain Italian words where s would be inappropriate, e.g. אֶפֹרְנִישֵׁי efornise 'e fornisci' (29a.2), נִלְרָאֶשֶׁנִּי nelarase, 'nella ragione' (11342), שֶׁלְּיֵשֶׁטִי seljesti, 'scegliesti'.

In most cases, where s immediately precedes another consonant (s before k, p, etc.), the usual consonant for s is used, i.e. samech: e.g. עֲסַנְפָּא escanpa, 'e salva', עֲסַפָּדָא espada. However, before t, the text consistently has W (usually unpointed) which must have the value shin, (ś) for if the scribe had intended s, he would have used samech not sin, as in the other cases. Thus we find the very frequent words quešto, nošto, always written with shin, and on f.113a in two sentences (ll. 7-12) there occur the following verbs in the second person singular: amašti, evolentašti, enalcašti, santefecašti, apresemašti. Four of these are written with a shin; and as though in confirmation of this pronunciation, the penultimate word in the list has the point indicating shin, thus: עֲסַפָּדָא. The importance of this spelling will be discussed later.

22. ḥ only occurs in Hebrew words (including those occurring in the Italian text, notably śabbad, 'sabato') and in the words חַיִּי Ded, 'Dio' and חַיִּי דֹמֶדֶד Domedded, 'Domeneddio'. Here the rapheh seems clearly to indicate the pronunciation d.

Vowels

Medial vowels

Between two consonants, the vowel signs are used as follows:

23. A pathach under the letter represents the vowel a, e.g.

שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ santo; but frequently the pathach is followed by an 'aleph, e.g. שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ seranno. Qamez occurs occasionally (frequently, of course, in the Hebrew part) and is equivalent to pathach. It occurs most frequently as the second of two a vowels and never occurs in an initial position.

24. י * represents e without any sign of a differentiation between close e and open e, e.g. שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ santefecamento, שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ fece.
25. Seghol also occurs, but very rarely and for the most part only as the second e of Domeded, thus: דֹּמֶדֶד
26. * occurs in unstressed initial syllables, usually after a consonant, especially in enclitics, e.g. שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ benedeto, שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ nemico, שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ keeso, 'che esso', שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ delamisericordia.

This does not seem to represent, as at first sight might appear, a close e, for we sometimes find zere in this position instead, but without yodh, e.g. שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ desenpre, 'di sempre'. If it did represent a different sound, it would be "e larga" (Franchi) which does not seem possible here. There is little doubt that, as seen in Chapter II, zere, seghol and vocal shewa are indistinguishable phonetically.

As can be seen from שֶׁנֶּסְטֹ, the shewa also has the distinct function of indicating the absence of a vowel (i.e. silent shewa) and it is never omitted in this text.

27. ¹* represents i, e.g. דִּלִּיפָּטְרִי delipatri, 'dei padri',
נֹשְׁטְרִי noštri.
28. ך represents o, e.g. קֹמֶי come, אֶסוֹ eso, 'esso',
לֹפּוֹפּוֹלֹ lopopolo, 'il popolo'.
29. ן represents u, e.g. סוּוֹ suo, לִמְלִי lumeli, 'gli umili',

Final Vowels

30. ך* is used to represent a, only at the end of a word, e.g. אֶלֶכָּסָא alacasa, 'alla casa', לֶסָא lasa, 'lascia'. ך* also occurs in this position, but very rarely.
31. The other final vowels are represented as the medial vowels outlined above, except that the shewa, of course, does not occur in this position.

Initial vowels and Hiatus

At the beginning of a word or after another vowel 'aleph is used to support the vowel or to separate it from the preceding one.

Thus:

32. א represents a, (This is quite distinct from 23 above, where the 'aleph follows the vowel), e.g. אַפֶּרֶס afare, 'a fare',
אַרֶּסְפּוּסֶרֶס arespuse, 'rispose', סוּא soa.
33. Similarly א represents initial e, e.g. אַנְפֶּרָא enfra, 'fra'. However, the conjunction e is often simply א, e.g. אַנְפֶּרָא . When written as a separate word it is always א, and the verb è is written in an identical manner.

34. יא represents i, e.g. יא יא io, יא יא noi.
 35. יא represents o, e.g. יא יא deone, 'di ogni', יא יא mio.
 36. יא represents u, e.g. יא יא lipauri, 'le paure'.

Grouped letters

37. יא represents a palatal l, e.g. יא יא יא lifiljoli; this should be distinguished from the type of spelling represented by the common early Italian filioli. The diphthongs are for the most part treated as two vowels in hiatus as is usually the case in Italian spelling, e.g. יא יא denoi.
 38. יא, יא, יא etc. in words such as questo, quanto, akuiſtatore could equally represent a pronunciation kvesto, etc.

However, the vowel value which unpointed י sometimes has in Italian pronunciation, and the fact that a special sign (double waw) occurs occasionally in this position, e.g. יא יא qua, (35a. 5), which is never used for the ordinary consonant v, suggest the sound u. However, other factors seem involved here which will be discussed below. For the moment the usual Italian spelling will be followed.

Accentuation

39. The methegh, a vertical stroke under the letter, is used^{in C} to indicate the tonic accent, with very few instances of inadvertent omission. Nevertheless it is regularly omitted in:

(a) monosyllables. (b) oxytones. (c) 'words' made up of two other words, e.g. enon, deti. (d) Hebrew words. (e) the word Domedded. It is possible that (c), (d) and (e) should really be grouped under (b).

Word Division

40. Words are generally separated quite distinctly and are not combined together in a purely arbitrary manner. Proclitics are generally treated as part of the following word, e.g. לֹנֹמֶה lonome, נֶלָמָנוּ nelamano, אֶסֶנְפֵּרֶה asenpre, אֶסְפַּנְדִּי espane, 'espandi'. Sometimes these are written as separate words, e.g. on the same line we find לֹסַבְבַּד and לֹ סַבְבַּד i.e. losabbad and lo sabbad. The conjunction וְ is frequent as a separate word, but when it is joined to the following word it is often written without yodh, e.g. אֶלָוֶנְטָה elavenuta.

Hebrew words

41. Hebrew words which occur in the Italian text, especially proper names, are written according to Hebrew practice (although the pointing does not always conform to classical canons), and are not assimilated to the system of transcription of the Italian text, e.g. יַאֲקֹב Ja'aqov (which if it were "Italianised" would be written without 'ayin), שָׂטָן Satan (in "Italianised" spelling it would be written with samech), שַׁבָּת sabbad ("Italianised" spelling would have daleth). These words, moreover, do not have the methegh.

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PLATE II

Text C

(British Museum Or. 9626)

f.33b

(actual size)

מפרי מרינו פרישנו מה בגדינו
עו רחמיה לנר סגור : מפני ר'
ג' י' נכונה בת

ומהבת

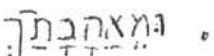
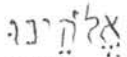



י' מרינו
מפרי לנו
רחמיה

טובה רחמיה ר' נגשטור קי מוש
ט' י' שררה פנפול טומו מפיר לקור
דור י' טומו ר' נגשטור קי קורדור
י' מושט סופר לרמיה ר' לופמטור
טומו ר' מ' טומו מ' רחמיה ר' ר'
נגשטור ר' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט'
מ' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט'
מ' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט'
מ' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט' ט'

As an illustration of the system of transcription at work there follows a reproduction of ff. 33b and 34a with a facing transcription (more or less diplomatic) and an edited version.

f 33b

Diplomatic version

1. àpri: edìçe perpìne a benedèto
2. tu domedded lode' sànto. epòi
3. dìçe 
4.  
5. eper 
6. lamòre
7. tòà domedded ded nòstro ke amas-
8. ti  pòpolo tuo eper lokor-
9. doljàre tuo re nòstro ke kordol-
10. jašti sòpre lòmeni de lopàto
11. tuo daèsti anòì domedded ded
12. nòstro ladi sètima gràne
13. esanta kuèsta agranèçe e
14. abaronìa e asantefekamènto e
15. arepòso e aserviçio

Edited version

Apri, e dice per fine a "Benedetto
tu Domedded lo Ded santo". E poi
dice "umeaavadach":

E per

l'amore

toa, Domedded Ded nòstro, che amas-
ti Jisrael, popolo tuo, e per lo cor-
dogliare tuo, re nòstro, che cordo-
gliašti sopra l'òmeni de lo patto
tuo, dæesti a noi, Domedded Ded
nòstro, la dî settimana granne
e santa questa, a grannezze e
a baronìa e a santefecamento e
a riposo e a servizio

PLATE IIa

Text C

(British Museum Or. 9626)
f. 34a

מִי־בְּרִיָּה מִמִּיָּנֻחַ וְיִי מִרְחֹמַי מִפִּי
מִנְחָה בְּיָדֶי־צִוְּתִי מִפְּחֵי דִקְוִנָּתִי קוֹ
דִּיתֵי נְשֻׁטִינִי מִרִּיתֵי דִי
לִפְנֵימִי נְשֻׁטִי בְּמִלְּכֵי־נֶטִיחַ נִלְוִפִי
סִמְחָתִי נְשֻׁטִי מִסְּנֵי־פִקָּה נִגְמִי
נִלְקִי קִשְׁמוֹת־נִמְיָנִי טוֹמִי מִיָּדֵי לִפְרִי
נְשֻׁטִי נִלְקִי נִגְמִי סִמְחָתִי
נִגְמִי דִי־לִבִּי טוֹמִי מִיָּדֵי מִלְּטָתִי
נִגְמִי נִלְקִי מִלְּטָתִי טוֹמִי מִיָּדֵי
מִמְשִׁקִּי קִשְׁמוֹתִי נְשֻׁטִי מִסְּנֵי־פִקָּה
טִי קִשְׁמוֹתִי טוֹמִי מִיָּדֵי דִי־טָרִי
נִגְמִי דִי־מִחְדָּה דִּיתֵי נְשֻׁטִי קִשְׁמוֹתִי
קִשְׁמוֹתִי מִקִּשְׁמוֹתִי מִיָּדֵי לִי טוֹ
שִׁבְתִּי סִבְתִּי טוֹמִי מִיָּדֵי מִלְּטָתִי
מִנְחָה טוֹמִי יִשְׁחָלֵל קִסְטֵי־פִקָּה

Diplomatic version

1. arengraziamentu e adàre
2. anòì benedigòni epàçe dakontèco.
3. ded nòstro eded de
4. lipàtri nòstri volènta nelopo-
5. s(à)kolo nòstro: esantèfeka nòi
6. nelikomanamenti tòì edda lapàrte
7. nòstra nelalèje tòà: satòla
8. nòi de lobène tuo efa alegràre
9. nòi nelasalvazione tòà
10. emonnèpeka lokòre nòstro aservìre
11. ti konveretade: efa redetàre
12. noi domedded ded nòstro
13. konamòre ekonplacemènto lo
14. sàbad sànto tuo: e alegrarànose
15. enti tùti ^{לך שם} kesantèfekano
(lonome tuo).

Edited version

- a ringraziamento e a dare
a noi benedizione e pace da conteco.
Ded nostro e Ded de
li patri nostri, volonta ne lo po-
sacolo nostro e santefeca noi
ne li comannamenti toi, e da' la parte
nostra ne la leje toa. Satolla
noi de lo bene tuo e fa' allegrare
noi ne la salvazione toa
e monnefecà lo core nostro a servire
ti con veretade. E fa' redetare
noi, Domedded Ded nostro,
con amore e con placement, lo
sciabbad santo tuo. E allegrarànnose
enti tutti Jisrael che santefecano
(lo nome tuo).

In order to compare this system of transcription with that of other texts a table has been drawn up setting out the main features of each text in parallel columns with the equivalent symbol in each text on the same line. This seems the clearest way to present the material. The Table has been inserted, for convenience of reference, at the end of this chapter (p.145).

Method

Many details and minor features have been included, for it is not easy to see which elements are only of minor significance until all have been compared.

It is not really accurate to take the sounds or even the letters of Italian as a basis, giving their equivalents in the Hebrew script, as has often been done before,⁷ unless the text is clearly in literary Italian; and this tends to turn the results upside-down and causes great confusion between sound and symbol.⁸ Moreover, none of the texts can be considered to be strictly phonetic, as can be seen, to mention only one feature, from the relatively little gemination indicated. Hence the Italian values given in the various text columns are only to be taken as a working approximation and the starting point for the Table are the Hebrew symbols found in the texts. Columns C - K represent pointed texts, O - R are consonantal. The few words which are pointed in some of the consonantal texts, such as P and L, have not been taken into account in the Table.⁹

In the column for each text, the Hebrew sign is given when it differs slightly from that in the 'Symbol' column.

The large number of symbols involved in the table is increased by the multiplicity of signs used for the same sound in some of the texts; the number of permutations possible, and in fact used, is considerable when vowel points

are employed. Even so, a number of minor symbols have been omitted for the sake of clarity, e.g. certain diphthongs (ià, iè, iò, iù, uò) have not been included as their treatment generally follows that of the diphthongs recorded; ñ has been omitted because it is treated like l', etc. In many cases, the appearance of arbitrariness is deceptive, as can be seen e.g. from the use of the symbols for the vowel e as outlined in paragraphs 24, 25, 26, and 33, above.

It is sometimes difficult to decide whether an unusual sign is an error or is intentional; in the pointing, which is much more subject to error than the consonants, the omission or misplacing of a dot is sufficient to change one vowel into another. The general practice of the scribe is of course the basis, but even an apparent aberration may be intentional, as e.g. the occurrence of 47 in B¹⁰ in the word tuo, spelt $\dot{\imath}\alpha\acute{\delta}$ (usually $\dot{\imath}\alpha\dot{\imath}\delta$). However, this can be accounted for by the scribe's having accidentally omitted the waw when writing the consonantal text and therefore using this expedient of the gibbuz to rectify the matter;¹¹ hence it cannot be considered an error. In assessing the affinities of the systems used in these texts not only the quantity of signs which coincide must be taken into account, but also the kind of sign involved.

Certain prominent single features may be more significant than a large number of coincidences or differences; and other factors which cannot be included in a table, such as the use of the signs to spell particular words,¹² must also be taken into account. Two examples will serve to illustrate this qualitative factor. 32 is in itself sufficient to show a very close relation between C and E; it is extremely unusual and unclassical,¹³ occurs only in

these two texts; even in these it is extremely infrequent, but in both it occurs only in the word terra.

A distinguishing feature of the opposite kind is 41 (see also 52), which only occurs in N (this too is quite unclassical). This might not be so significant if it occurred infrequently (in contrast to the previous example), for it might then be considered an aberration for 39 (i.e. an extra point added absent-mindedly). But its use as the regular sign for the vowel e shows that the system of transcription of N is remote from that of the other texts.

General remarks

The following remarks are intended to explain those symbols which are not self-evident and to point out general features of note.

Certain features are common to all the texts, whereas others show wide variation; hence each text has characteristics of its own. Consequently some show a very close affinity while others are more distantly related.

Features which are used in much the same way in all the texts are: gimel(4) for g, teth(12) for t, lamed(17) for l, mem(19) for m, nun(20) for n, samech(22) for s, qoph(29) for k and resh(31) for r, although even some of these can have a daghesh in certain texts. The other consonants show greater variation in usage from text to text.

However, the greatest diversity is found in the vowel system, 39 and 64 being the only signs used with any degree of constancy in all the texts.

In the consonants, the daghesh is used for gemination in C, B, and E but not in the other texts. In the use of daghesh in 3 and 26 a fusion seems to have taken place between two systems, the classical one of 3= b and 1= v, and one which would seem more suitable for consonantal texts, using

rapheh, i.e. 1 = b and 2 = v. Hence we find greater use of the ostensibly less ambiguous waw for v (9); this however could be confused with vowels o and u (45, 46), especially in a consonantal text, but it is avoided by doubling the consonant (10), the solution favoured particularly by B,D,F,G,N,L. C has utilised both rapheh and daghesch to create a more subtle system than any of the other texts, i.e. 1 = b, 2 = v, 3 = bb. Hence in many texts both 2 and 9 (or 10) are used for v. However they are not altogether interchangeable, as A, for instance, generally uses 9 before i and e, but 2 before a, o, u.¹⁴

The preference for 24 = p, 25 = f over the system 24 = f, 26 = p is striking and accords better with a consonantal system than a pointed system.¹⁵

11 is used only before a sonant consonant but not for the intervocalic Italian s which is conveyed by 22.

The brackets in 34 and 35 indicate that the sign is only found in the Hebrew words in the text.¹⁶

The commonest sign for a is 37, where the aleph is really superfluous in a pointed text. In a purely consonantal text like R aleph is used consistently to indicate the vowel a; but it is rather surprising to find it used for every a vowel in F, which is a fully pointed text, and seems to indicate that F derives from a consonantal text which has later been pointed. In some texts the vowel occurs frequently both with and without the mater lectionis (36 and 37), and although this is apparently quite arbitrary in some cases (the same word being spelt both with 36 and with 37 in the same text¹⁷), an analysis of A shows that, discounting initial and final vowels (which involve a special use of aleph - cf. 48, 49, 50), there is a strong tendency to use 37 for the tonic vowel and 36 for the atonic vowel.¹⁸

Similarly i, o, and u are always accompanied by the mater lectionis (44, 45, 46) and e usually is, as its most common symbol by far is 39. Here again the yodh in 44 and 39, and the waw in 45 seem superfluous in a pointed text. 40 is rare in most of the texts, being frequently confined to a single word (in C, A, B and E); but N has the very unclassical form 41 (i.e. followed by yodh) as the usual sign for e, and it also appears somewhat erratically in H.

The peculiar 42 occurs frequently in B, F, G, H even for a tonic vowel. As we have seen from chapter III, there was no clear differentiation between zere, seghol and vocal shewa in the Italian pronunciation of Hebrew; nevertheless shewa followed by yodh and used as a full vowel would never be found in any Hebrew text. Comparison with other texts can help to explain how this may have come about.

Although texts like C, A and E do not use this anomalous sign, they do use shewa in some initial syllables and proclitics, notably in be-, de-, ke- (43) and e- (54), but only when these are joined to the following word; when de, ke, e are written as separate words (see 73 - 76) they are regularly spelt with 51. This is easily linked with Hebrew spelling, for it is common for the initial vowel of a Hebrew trisyllabic (or longer) word to be reduced to shewa; and in particular the peculiar analogy between the Hebrew servile letters¹⁹ (pointed with shewa) and Italian proclitics such as e, de, ne (or en), ke must have had its effect on the scribes of the Siddur and Bible translations, always so conscious of the original. This analogy must have been all the more striking as the commonest servile letter, waw (= 'and') is used extremely often in Hebrew to begin ~~in~~ a phrase or sentence, and its Italian

equivalent e is very similar in structure when joined to the following word. Hence Hebrew $\text{ע} = \text{h.}^{\text{X}}$ (rather than ע^{X}) must have been a constantly recurring temptation. This, then, is the stage we find in C, A and E, i.e. shewa used only in an initial syllable; and it is easy to see how its use could be extended to other vowels in the word, where addition or presence of a yodh would prevent confusion with the frequent silent shewa.²⁰

Cholem without waw, rather surprisingly, does not occur even in any of the pointed texts, showing an attachment for the mater lectionis (see 45) which one might expect only in a consonantal text.

Final -a is generally expressed with he (48) which is more classical and explicit than 49. This is especially so in a consonantal text and indeed is used constantly by L. The rare occurrence of 49 in A, C and E seems to derive from cases like fare, fanno, etc., written with aleph which is then transferred to fa on occasion although its normal ending is 48. The earlier pointed texts are all meticulous in inserting silent shewa (64) under a consonant which immediately precedes another but the more 'modern' texts depart from this practice. The printed Siddurim, H, (J) and K, frequently omit it; N constantly does so, evidently under the influence of Italian spelling, and as it regularly inserts the other vowels, this gives the word a curious appearance unlike any other text e.g. הַלֵּל , altra. L, although almost wholly unpointed, occasionally inserts a shewa under double consonants apparently to make clear what is intended by this device which is so extraordinary in a Hebrew text, e.g. עֵינַי occhio.

The division of words (73 - 77) varies more than would appear from the Table, as only certain representative words are shown. In A - F pro-

clitics are usually joined to the following word but the Table shows those which are fairly often written also as separate words.

The separation is much more frequent in G and H and is nearly always made in N. In L, word division is fully that of normal Italian 16th century spelling.

The spelling of the word for Dio⁽⁷⁹⁾ has been treated separately because it was found to have peculiar features of its own. Apart from the use of taw, which never occurs in any other word, the last two syllables are in some texts frequently spelt with zere + zere or zere + seghol in C and E, and with seghol + seghol in A etc., but always without yodh, a spelling found in no other words in these texts. This peculiar word will be discussed in the next chapter.

Classification of the systems of transcription

The outstanding features of the ^{systems of the} texts and their closeness to each other may be outlined as follows.

C, A and E are very closely related, the affinities between C and E being particularly noticeable. Although ^{the systems of} these two texts are not identical, their treatment of most features is consistently similar. Points of significance are the manner of using 1, 2, 3 and 9 to render b and v²¹; the indication of gemination, in fewer characters and less frequently in E (3, 18, 21, 23, 31) than in C²² (3, 13, 18, 21, 23, 28, 30, 32) but very similar nevertheless, particularly 32; the peculiar feature of 5, e.g. in inganno; the vowels in general, but in particular, the use of 43 in proclitics, the use of 40 only in Domededh; the strikingly identical double spellings of this word itself in both texts (79 - note also the identical manner of using daghesh in the two daleth in the word); the separation of lo only before šabbath.

Minor differences worth noting between the texts are the more regular and frequent separation of the conjunction e in E than in C and the use of 66 - 67.

A is very closely related to these two in character, slightly more so to E than to C, although there are some fairly minor but distinct differences between A and E. Features in common include 9 and 11, and the distribution of 14 - 16; the use of the vowels in general, including the distribution of 36 and 37, the use of 59 and 61, the distribution of 48 - 9 (i.e. 49 in only a few rare cases, similar in both texts) but particularly the use of 40 only in Domadedh (and 79 itself - note the absence of yodh in all three texts, C, A. and E), the use of 43 (note the vowel structure of the frequent word benedetto ^{i0'7'11} in all three texts). On the other hand there is no gemination indicated, 3 and 26 being used in a different way from C and E; 8 is more freely used in A; 35 (also 69) is not a fundamental difference but is of some importance and will be discussed in cap. V.²³ Still within a similar type is D, but it shows greater affinity to A than to C and E in both vocal and consonantal structure. However there are a few important differences from A.

These are the absence of 36 (37 being constant for a); the constant grouping of 68 (where A uses 69); the occurrence of 71 in sempre (although 70 in most other words); the spelling of 79 (noticeably the a in the second syllable, Domadedh); the use of 60 and 62 (A has 59 and 61). Of much less significance are the presence of 38 and the absence of 49.

B and F have many features in common with these four texts, yet have some radical features which set them rather apart.

B is linked particularly to C and E by its indication of gemination, which however is less frequent even than in E and in fewer letters (3, 13,

21, 23). However it has some features which set it apart from these, particularly its use of 40 (regularly but almost solely in sempre); its frequent use of 42 and 55, and the daleth in 79.

F, too, stands apart by its use of 27, where the other texts have 33 - 35 (but this is more a dialect difference than a difference in the system of transcription)²⁴; and consequent rarity of 33; its constancy in using 37; its frequent use of 42; its use of 49 for final -a²⁵; its use of 68 where the others have 69 (although not D). Despite these differences, because of the great number of features in common and cross-links between the systems texts A, B, C, D, E and F form a group which may be divided into two types, A,C,D and E on the one hand and B and F on the other.

G, H (and J) are similar to this group but stand quite apart in frequently omitting the silent shewa and using 41 frequently,²⁶ features which never occur in group A - F, and in their generally erratic nature and irregularity. O is next in affinity to group one but has some features which separate it distinctly. Particularly outstanding is the placing of the pathach under the consonant in a group of consonant + liquid + a, e.g. pla- written pal-, a feature of which there are no instances in the texts of the first group.

The Consonantal Texts

The systems used in the purely consonantal texts are obviously much simpler, yet more difficult to interpret accurately as it is much more difficult to reach any certain conclusions about the vowel values intended - except where the language is clearly literary Italian. Here comparison must be made not only with the other consonantal texts but also with the consonantal element of the texts already discussed.

In this respect O and P are particularly interesting as they present us with a unique opportunity of examining a text which is complete in both a consonantal and pointed version.

Another text of particular interest is L because it shows some striking differences from all the other texts. O and P are also unique in that the other works of which we have several copies are all translations; this means that we can never be certain if we are dealing with different copies of the same work or independent translations which closely resemble each other. On the other hand, the other Judaeo-Italian works which are original compositions are only known in one copy.

Cassuto had collated these two texts for his edition of the Elegy, and quite rightly gives all genuine variants ignoring differences between the MSS. which are of a purely graphic nature²⁷ and could not therefore affect a critical edition. But it is just these divergences which concern us here and will be seen to be of some value in interpreting ^{those} Judaeo-Italian texts of which there only exists a vocalised version.

Cassuto has shown that these two texts are not directly related, i.e. neither is the original, nor is one copied from the other.²⁸ It is clear that the work must have originally been written as a purely consonantal text, otherwise the scribe of P would have copied the vowels too, as he did in the Hebrew text which surrounds P and is in the same hand.²⁹ P is, furthermore, also the more correct copy and therefore closer to the original.³⁰ Moreover, we can see to some extent how the transformation took place from a consonantal to a pointed text, for the occasional vocalised words in texts such as P itself and L are a kind of half-way stage in which we can sometimes see why certain words have been pointed - usually because the word is ambiguous or

PLATE III

Text P (Parma 2736),
f. 166a (greatly enlarged),
containing lines 4-48 of the Elegia,
including six of the seven words in
the text which are pointed.

[illegible]

PLATE III

Text P (Parma 2736),
f. 166a (greatly enlarged),
containing lines 4-48 of the Elegia,
including six of the seven words in
the text which are pointed.

[illegible]

difficult in a purely consonantal Hebrew form. In P, for instance, where only seven words are pointed, the rhyme words of lines 109 and 111 are written in an identical manner in their consonants. The first of these words is clearly fatto (written fato) and the rhyme word of the next line (110) is desfatto; hence in order to prevent the reader^{from} being tempted to read line as 111 fatto, the word has had the points added and is now unambiguously patto. The lines are as follows (in P):

E/çeto f'aga come ao/fato,
e/sia štruto e/desfato,
ka fao rumpere la/leje el/pato.

Hence we can see in this text the process taking place whereby the original assumed the form it has in O.³¹

What we should expect in two texts of this kind is for the consonantal layout to be almost identical. The limited number of the genuine variants, and the limited nature of these,³² show that both texts are very close. Yet slight though they are, the purely graphic differences between the consonantal structure of the two MSS. are surprisingly numerous. The following is a table of every difference between the two in the first 39 lines of the poem,³³ ignoring the pointing:

line	O	P	Critical text (Cassuto)
1	לאינטי	לאינטי	La ienti
	אילוטא	אלוטא	e lotta
3	אמאנו	אימאנו	em manu
4	אלא	אילא	e la
6	פילומונדו	פירלומונדו	pe lo mundu
	גאטיבאנדו	גאטיבנדו	gattivandu

<u>Line</u>	<u>Q</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>Critical text</u> (Cassuto)
7	נאלצטא	נאלצטה	nalzata
8	אדורנטא	אדורנטה	adornata
9	דאדיאו	דדיאו	da Deo
	אמאטא	אמאטה	amata
11	אדופירי	אדופירי	ad offeriri
	אלוטימפלן	אלוטינפלן	a lo templo
12	דלוגרנטי	דילוגרנדי	de lo granti
13	אדורנטי	אדורנאטי	adornati
14	דסיצירדוטי	דסצירדוטי	de sicerdoti
	אונטאטי	אונטאטי	avantati
16	מלי	מאלי	male
17	ריבילרן	ריבילארן	revillaru
19	קוישטן	קווישטן	quisto
20	אידנפרי	אידנפריאן	e d'emperiu
21	סואי	סואן	soi
22	סיגרנדי	סיגרני	sì granni
25	מציאטא	מציאטה	meciata
27	אוי	אן	ohi
29	קינגרנטי	קינגרנדי	ke n granti
	דפיקאטן	דפיקאטי	deficato
30	דצילן	דאצילן	da celo
	אפלאמאטן	אפלאמבאטן	afflammato
31	פלאצא	פלאצה	palaza
32	פלאצא	פלאצה	plaza
33	דיספאצא	דיספאצה	desfacza

<u>Line</u>	<u>Q</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>Critical text (Cassuto)</u>
35	דגנדי	דגנדי	de granni
	אפרי	אפרי	affari
37	פירארי	פירארי	pi mare
39	אמארי	אמארי	em mare
	יטרי	יטרי	iettare

These differences can be seen to include genuine variants such as per for pe etc., errors and mere aberrations, all of which occur in a somewhat sporadic fashion. But certain features show a pattern of recurrence. This can be seen more clearly if we group the same kind of difference together under one head.

In comparison with Q:³⁴

- (a) P has no ׳ : 1.2, (14.1), (27),
- (b) P has ״ for ׳ : 1.1,
- (c) P has ׳ : 3,4,11.1, 12, 29.2, 29.1
- (d) P has פיר for פ׳ : 6.1, 37
- (e) P has no א : 6.2, 9.1
- (f) P has ם for א : 7,8,9.2, 25, 31, 32, 33
- (g) P has ך for ן : 11.2
- (h) P has ט for ם : 12, 29.1
- (i) P has א : 13, 14.2, 16, 17, 20, 30.1, 35.1, 35.2, 39.2.
- (j) P has ״ for ׳ : 19
- (k) P has ך for ׳ : 21
- (l) P has no ט : 22
- (m) P has ך : 30.2

It is immediately clear from this that there are only three kinds

of discrepancy which recur with any frequency, (c), (f) and (i). These all involved a reduction in the matres lectionis especially aleph. The consonantal text has not merely had the vowels inserted but in the process the matres lectionis have tended to be left out as no longer necessary. This was probably not a conscious process on the part of the scribe otherwise he would have carried it out more consistently, but in writing down what he has read he has unwittingly left out particularly the aleph, as the vowel a would be indicated by a pathach in any case; similarly with yodh, and in one case waw; the he which occurs frequently in P, is now also less necessary to indicate final a.

Obviously every vocalised text would not be affected in exactly the same way as O, but tendencies shown above coincide too closely with conditions found in the pointed texts for this to be an isolated case; and they help to explain some of the inconsistencies and duplications of texts like C.

In particular, comparison of O and P shows just how much and how easily the graphic aspect of a Judaeo-Italian text, which is not affected in any way by the language of the scribe, can be modified in copying even when the texts are both still close to the original, a considerable change taking place when a consonantal text is pointed. Even a conspicuous change like (f) can take place quite consistently.

The comparison also shows how the matres lectionis, especially aleph, are likely to be reduced in pointing a consonantal text; and this explains well the variegated use of 36 and 37 in such careful texts as C, A and E, if these are the result of copying from a consonantal text.

It is not only the reduction of yodh in (c) which is notable but the

PLATE IV

Text L (Parma 2506),
f. 98a (greatly enlarged).

coincidence of the manner in which it takes place with the peculiar duplication of 51 and 53 in C, e.g. in such cases as elutta (line 1) and ela (line 4), where initial $\text{ʿ}\chi$ has become χ .

The system of transcription of L has some unusual features which are such as to set it apart from the other texts. The facsimile (opposite) and the transcription below, besides serving to illustrate the format, calligraphy and language,³⁵ show how the system of transcription offers the strongest possible contrast to that of C (see pp. 101-115).

Text L, f. 98a:-

(Spelling and punctuation are those of the scribe, except for some slight modernisation such as capital letters, the use of c, ch, g for k, and sc+i,e for ś, etc. The figures indicate the lines of the text.)

Sefer koheleth belason la'az ['Il libro di Ecclesiaste in volgare']

- (1) Parole dello eclesiasto filiolo di David, re in Jerusalaim.
- (2) Vanita dele vanita, dise lo eclesiasto, vanita dele vanita tute le cose vanita. (3) Che e di piu all'omo di tuta la fatica sua per laquale si afatica soto il sole. (4) Generazione va, e generazione viene, e la terra sta in seculo. (5) E nascera il sole e tramontera il sole, e ritornera al loco suo dove nasce (6) Va amezzo di, e circuisce a aquilone, circuendo, $\overset{\tau}{\underset{\chi}{\text{cicuendo}}}$ va il vento (7) e a circuiti sui ritorna il vento. (8) Tuti i fiumi vanno al mare, e il mare non si empie, al loco nel (9) quale vanno i fiumi quivi ritornano a cioche ricaminino. (10) Tute le cose sono faticose, non po parlare l'omo, non si sazia (11) l'occhio veggendo, ne si sazia l'orecchio vedendo.[?] (12) Qual e quello che fu, quello stesso che si fara, e quale e quello (13) che fu fatto quello stesso che si fara, e niente di novo e soto il sole. (14) E cosa alcuna dela quale si possa dire, vedi questa e nova, (15) gia fu ne secoli, che furno avanti anoi. (16) Non e memoria de primi, ne ancora de posterì che saranno, (17) non sara loro memoria,

con quelli che saranno dipoi. (18) Io eclésiasto fui re sopra Jisrael in Jeruśalaim. (19) E detti il core mio, acercare e investigare nela sapienzia (20) sopra ogni cosa che e fata soto il cielo, questa cattiva (21) ocupazione dette Idio afilioli di Adam acioche si ocupino in essa. (22) Risguardai[?] tute le opere che si fanno soto il[?] sole, e (23) ecco tute sono vanita, e cogitazione di spirito. (24) La curuita non si po dirizzare, et il mancamento non si po numerare. (25) Io o parlato col core mio dicendo ecco^{io} mi sono magnificato (26) e agiunsi sapienzia sopra ciascuno che fu avanti a me (27) in Jeruśalaim, e il core mio vidde lamoltitudine dela sapienzia (28) e dela scienza. (29) E detti il core mio a sapere la sapienzia ela scienza e stol- (30) tizie ela dottrina, conobbi[?] che ancora questo era cogitazione di spirito.

The system of transcription of text L is instructive in quite a different direction from that of P. Apart from making it distinct from the other texts, its system of transcription gives us a valuable clue to the dating of the MS., and helps, by contrast, to put the mutual affinities of the other texts in better perspective. Moreover, its system of transcription derives from an unexpected source. In L the sound ġ in such words as veggendo, generazione, is represented by gimel+yodh, a rather sophisticated device which finds no counterpart in texts so far examined.

A feature of this text which appears in no other text and which is quite foreign to Hebrew spelling is the use of double consonants. We find on f.98a alone the following examples: c in occhio, orecchio, ecco; d in vidde; g in veggendo; l in all'omo, dello (but dela, nela), quello (but queli); n in vanno, saranno, fanno; r in terra; s in stesso, possa, essa; t in fatto, detti, cattiva, dette, dottrina (but tuto, soto, fata 'fatta'). Most of the Judaeo-Italian texts do not indicate gemination at all, and it would normally seem impossible in a purely consonantal text; some of the texts

using a very refined system, such as C, indicate it fairly frequently by means of the daghesh forte. Moreover, this text has none of those features found in other texts which have no analogy in Italian orthography, such as 69 and 70.

Even more unexpected is the introduction of apostrophes and what look like commas. Apart from the way the latter are written, that they are commas rather than the normal Hebrew points marking a caesura can be seen by the way they are used - this too in a manner unlike that of the other texts, e.g. lines 6-7 (Ecclesiastes, 1.6) are punctuated thus:

"Va amezzo di, e circuiſe a aquilone, circuendo, circuendo va
il vento e a circuiti sui ritorna il vento."

There is no doubt, however, about the apostrophes; they are unmistakeable in words such as all'omo, l'occhio, l'orecchio.

The form et alternates with e and is more frequent in some parts of the MS. than others.

There can only be one source for all these features: the orthographic habits of normal Italian.

The symbol for g is clearly modelled on Italian spelling (such as the gi of giorno, etc.) rather than on anything suggested by Hebrew practice.

The double consonants are characteristically Italian.

The apostrophes and commas have no counterpart in Hebrew or other Judaeo-Italian texts and et is a common spelling in Italian writing even into the seventeenth century.

This dependence on written Italian shows once again the inaccuracy of the idea that the scribes could not read normal Italian.

This provides a basis for dating more correctly this MS. which has

been assessed as of much the same date as the Siddur MSS., the end of the 15th or beginning of the 16th centuries.³⁶

The hand of L shows the kind of slipshod fluency of someone long accustomed to writing Hebrew. Hence it is unlikely that a Hebrew writer of this kind would be influenced by Italian orthographic habits until these had been firmly and widely established in Italian writings.

For a device like the apostrophe to have sufficient impact on a writer of a Hebrew text, where it is quite alien, presupposes its fully established use in Italian texts.

The apostrophe was introduced for the first time in Italian by Bembo in the Aldine edition of Petrarch of 1501.³⁷ This completely rules out the 15th century for text L. However the use of the apostrophe was taken up only slowly - even Bembo's 1502 edition of Dante has forms like luno, laltro, and the reprint of 1510 of the Petrarch has Quandio vodo "quand'io v'odo", etc. The modern system was not fixed until Salviati's Degli Avvertimenti della lingua sopra 'l Decamerone (1584-86). Moreover, the adoption of the apostrophe in hand-written works was very much slower than in printing.

The distribution of double consonants in our text is also revealing. There is no sign of syntactical gemination, still common in Tuscan writing at least at the beginning of the 16th century,³⁸ and even later in the century we would certainly expect a Tuscan writer to have a keener instinct for gemination (especially in tuto, soto, idio), than the limited occurrence in our text. However the language is clearly literary Italian³⁹ (noticeable are the futures in -er- of the first conjugation e.g. tramontera, ritornera). Hence the writer was not Tuscan, but the kind of word showing gemination, together with the kind of hesitation in its use, are such as we find in Northern writers in the

16th century.

Such factors as these, together with the general modernity of the language, make it unlikely that this text was written before the second half of the 16th century. It must have been written in one of those Northern towns such as Mantua or Ferrara where conditions were still favourable for literary production of this kind, in contrast to the Centre and the South.

Apart from providing a guide to its date and place of origin, the system of transcription of L provides something of a scale against which to set the other Judaeo-Italian texts, showing to what extent an alternative was available in the systems of transcription adopted and thus illustrating the essential unity of A-F and the relative closeness of the other texts studied. For this text is perhaps the one whose method of writing Italian in Hebrew characters is most like the improvisation so often envisaged, based as it is on a logical adaptation of Italian spelling conventions.

Conclusion.

In the following summary of the relationship of the systems of transcription some texts have been considered which have not been discussed in detail above, but which can now be considered on the basis of the criteria set out above.

The methods of transcription in texts C and E are extremely similar and A is very close to these, while D is similar to A but not so much to C and E; B and F stand somewhat apart from these four. However, despite some considerable variation, these six texts all have close links.

O (and therefore also P) has a similar type of system to this group while possessing some minor features distinguishing it from them. The system of K is similarly related to this group but is simpler than any of the systems of texts A-F, almost a kind of common denominator of the transcription systems

of these six texts. N, L and R have systems unlike the A-F group, R being perhaps the closest to them.

G, H and J are basically very similar to the A-F group but have a less ordered system.

Comparison of O and P shows the kind of changes which take place in adding vowel points to a consonantal text. Some of these changes explain features of the other pointed texts. L demonstrates also the kind of information which can be deduced about a text from its system of transcription: its date, the area of Italy in which it was written and something of the sources of its scribe's literary habits.

From this outline it is clear that the method of transcription has not been improvised in each case,⁴⁰ although each scribe certainly had individual mannerisms, for within the fairly broad limits outlined above there may be said to have been an Italian system for writing the vernacular in Hebrew characters, as there was a system for the vernacular in Latin characters - no more uniform, but perhaps no less so (considering the greater variety of symbols available in a pointed Hebrew text). We might consider a text like L to have adhered to this spelling tradition very little and it will be seen in cap.V that the language of the text has a great deal to do with this. The transcription system of L is nevertheless very Italian. Indeed, only the later texts are perhaps genuinely isolated from this spelling tradition and might be considered to be based on improvisation. But what a text like L is really based on is a different spelling tradition, that of normal Italian. Even so, it seems probable that the scribes of these texts were not altogether unacquainted with previous habits of writing Italian in Hebrew characters.

The accompanying table then, in spite of its complexity, embodies

in effect a recognisable Italian system for writing the vernacular in Hebrew characters. So much so that Italian words in Hebrew characters, not written in the Italian manner, are immediately detectable from comparison with the above data. A single example will serve to illustrate this.

In one of the account books published by Cassuto, mentioned above,⁴¹ the months zener and fevrer occur spelt $\gamma\gamma\lambda'\gamma$ ⁴² and $\gamma\gamma\gamma\lambda'\gamma$.⁴³ Although these are Venetian dialect, comparison with the above findings shows that these words could not have been written by an Italian Jew; in fact they betray signs of a Yiddish writer.⁴⁴ In fact the creditor was named Feibesesch Popart and he came from Germany.⁴⁵

Here we have discussed the purely graphic aspects of the texts, quite apart from any consideration of language; and these will be seen to be of some importance in determining the relationship of the texts and their relative dialect colouring.

Notes to Chapter IV

1. The significance of the pronunciation of Hebrew for the interpretation of the systems of transcription has already been discussed and the dependence of this chapter on the preceding one is evident. Hence in order to avoid complicated cross-references, in most cases no detailed allusions to the preceding chapter are made in the following analysis. However, to facilitate reference, the consonants bear the same numbers in both chapters. (This numbering cannot be applied to the vowels as these require a different grouping in each case.)

2. In quotations and for the purposes of concepts such as "medial", "initial", etc., the word unit considered is that used by the scribe, not modern word division. In this section the methegh (accent), which occurs in the majority of the words in the text, is omitted in the quotations to avoid any confusion with the vowel points.

3. Each prayer is preceded by the first two or three words of the normal Hebrew text. There are also some Hebrew words (mostly proper names) in the Italian text itself.

4. e.g. J.B. Sermoneta, Una trascrizione... cit., p. 41.

5. This problem is not limited to texts in Hebrew characters, but applies also to normal Italian texts, as can be seen from the difficulty of interpreting Boiardo's method of representing ~~of~~ these same phonemes. Did Boiardo mean alci, calci, etc. to be read alzi, calzi?

11. This also incidentally confirms the equivalence of shureq and gibbuz mentioned in chapter III.
12. e.g. both C and F have 2 and 10 (or 11) for v, but C spells vivo וִיבּוֹ , whereas F spells it וִיוּ , since B tends to use 2 before o or u (volta, volenta, etc.), but 10 before other vowels.
13. In normal Hebrew, resh is one of the five letters which never have daghesh.
14. This probably derives from the ambiguity of waw followed by 45, 46 or aleph when a text was written without vowel points; whereas' 1 is clearly vi or ve even without pointing.
15. The rapheh (as in 25) being sometimes employed in an unpointed text whereas the daghesh (as in 26) is not.
16. The Hebrew words are not normally taken into account but in this case they indicate the character of the shin when it is used in the Italian text.
17. e.g. in C we find nelamano spelt נִלְמָנוּ on f.28b, line 1, and נִלְמָנוּ just two lines below.
18. An analysis of all the a vowels on five pages of text (ff.8b-10b) gives the following result;
- Of the 58 a vowels written with aleph only 18 are atonic,
of the 49 a vowels written without aleph only 10 are tonic.
19. Particularly waw, cheth, lamed and beth.

20. This seems the most likely explanation, rather than seeing this use of shewa as a sign of weakening of the protonic vowel which occurs in dialects of a wide area of southern Italy.

21. See the remarks above, p. 119.

22. However, even C by no means indicates gemination regularly. *Gemination*
is ^{indicated} ~~scattered~~ sporadically throughout the text, obviously being considered of secondary importance (and indeed may well have had little significance for anyone but the scribe); it occurs perhaps 20% to 30% of the times one might expect it.

23. See below, p. 166.

24. e.g. it has goarice where the others have guarise, etc.

25. 48 occurs only in hiatus, e.g. soa, toa, etc.

26. This often occurs in patches alternating with 39. In parts of H, 41 is used regularly for questo, quello and e, but in other parts it is used quite haphazardly.

27. See especially his remarks in Un'antichissima elegia... cit., p. 391 : "Riferisco... le varianti di P di fronte a F [= text 0] (tralasciando quelle meramente grafiche)..."

28. *ibid.* p. 353.

29. The text of P occurs in an otherwise normal Hebrew machzor as part of the service for the 9th Ab.

30. See Cassuto, Un' antichissima elegia... cit., p. 353.
31. It is important to note that O and P have been pointed independently as the pointing even in the 7 words in P is different from that in O.
32. For which see Cassuto's apparatus, pp. 392 - 403.
33. It would have been unnecessarily cumbersome to include the whole poem - the rest of the poem presents a very similar picture.
34. A word of explanation to make clear what this table is meant to convey; as an example, (c) means that P has a yodh (where O has none) in the spelling of the words quoted above from lines 3, 4, 11 (the first word of the two quoted), 12, etc.
35. See chapter V, below, p. 208; and see p. 58, above.
36. See Cassuto, Bibliografia..., cit., p. 138 (no. 26).
37. For details of the introduction of the apostrophe into Italian see Migliorini, Saggi linguistici, cit., pp. 221-3.
38. *ibid.* p. 219.
39. In L, the few vowels which are inserted help to confirm that the language is literary Italian if confirmation were necessary; and this pointing seems certainly to have been added by the writer of the consonants. On f. 98a, line 5, he has written the nun and yodh of ritornera badly so that together they look like a teth; and as there are no dher

vowels on the same line, or near by and the word is not difficult, it is evident that he has inserted the vowels to avoid a misreading of the word.

40. As has already been mentioned, the manner of writing Italian in Hebrew characters has generally been treated as an improvisation.

Roth's remarks on the Hymne:

"il va sans dire que les accents toniques et la ponctuation sont complètement absents du texte original," (Un hymne sabbatique..., cit., p. 80)

are typical in this respect in assuming that the scribe was attempting to render Italian in Hebrew characters as best he could and that the finer subtleties could not therefore be expected. Comparison with texts such as C, A and E shows that this cannot be taken for granted.

41. Alcune note ebraiche..., cit.

42. *ibid.*, p.55.

43. *ibid.*, p.56.

44. because of the zayin and the ayin.

45. See Cassuto, Alcune note ebraiche..., cit., p. 58.

Consonants	Symbol	Value in text:	A	B	D	E	F	G	H	K	O	N	P	L	R
1	ג	b	b occ.	b	b	b	b rare	b	b freq.	b	v, b		v, b	b	b
2	כ	v freq.	v freq.	v rare	v freq.	v	v occ.	v rare	b	g	v occ.	b	g	d	d
3	ק	bb occ.	bb rare	bb	bb rare	bb	bb	g	g	d	b, bb	g	d	TT dd	
4	ח	g	g	g	(n+)g	(n+)g	g	d	d	d	(n+)g	d	d		
5	ט	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d freq.	d	d		
6	צ	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d		
7	ץ	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d		
8	ף	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d		
9	פ	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
10	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
11	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
12	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
13	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
14	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
15	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
16	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
17	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
18	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
19	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
20	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
21	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
22	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
23	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
24	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
25	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
26	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
27	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
28	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
29	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
30	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
31	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
32	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
33	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
34	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
35	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Medial	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
36	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
37	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
38	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
39	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
40	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
41	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
42	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
43	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
44	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
45	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
46	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
47	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Final	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
48	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
49	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Initial	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
50	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
51	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
52	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
53	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
54	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
55	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
56	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
57	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
58	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Diph-	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
thongs	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
59	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
60	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
61	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
62	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
63	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Absence of	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
64	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Consonant	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
65	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
66	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
67	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
68	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
69	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
70	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
71	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Accent	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
72	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
Word	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
73	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
74	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
75	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
76	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
77	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
78	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ
79	פ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ

TABLE comparing the systems of transcription. Where comment on the frequency of use of a particular sign is called for, the following abbreviations are used:

usu. = usually employed to represent the Italian sound
 freq. = frequently
 occ. = occasionally
 rare = rarely

Other abbreviations:
 init. = when occurring in an initial position
 intervoo. = " " intervooalio "

Chapter V

The texts and their language

Now that the systems of transcription have been examined, giving on the one hand a basis for reading and transcribing the texts correctly, and on the other, a valuable palaeographic indication of their relationship, the language of the texts can be examined with a frame of reference which helps to distinguish obscure or unusual graphic signs from true linguistic features.

The principal problem with which we are concerned here is to determine the nature of the language of the Judaeo-Italian texts. Theories as to the language of the Jews in Italy in the late Middle Ages must be based on the evidence derived from the extant texts; does this evidence lead to the conclusion that the Jews spoke a Judaeo-Italian koine, a common dialect which was peculiar to them alone? As we have seen in Chapter I above, this is the conclusion reached by Cassuto.¹

Once this theory was established, the language of other texts was subsequently identified as this same Jewish dialect and, despite doubts expressed by G. Fiorentino² and M. Berenblut,³ this concept is still current.⁴ These linguistic conclusions were, of course, based principally on the evidence of the extant Judaeo-Italian texts. Although Cassuto only gave a detailed linguistic account of one text, the Elegia, he nevertheless reiterates and amplifies his theories when examining other texts, and in particular includes translations of the Bible and of the Siddur in texts written in Judaeo-Italian dialect.

It is true that many of the texts represent a distinctly dialectal language with some unusual features. But is a Jewish dialect of the kind envisaged by Cassuto the only possible explanation for these linguistic peculiarities, or is there some other, more probable, explanation?

The texts to be examined include six MSS. and three printed editions of translations of the daily prayer book - a relatively large number in the field of Judaeo-Italian texts, where it is rare to find a work in more than one MS. This number presents an unusual opportunity for examination on a comparative basis.

The language of several other Judaeo-Italian texts will also be discussed; but, in particular, attention must be given to those texts which have been considered to be in Judaeo-Italian dialect. Of particular interest are the extracts from the Divine Comedy, not least because, in order to show that their language is the koine, their editor presents a close argument with detailed evidence - a treatment not often found in articles on Judaeo-Italian texts. Moreover, this article of 1964 demonstrates that the koine theory is still very much alive.⁵

In examining these texts our principal concern is to determine what kind of language they are written in, rather than to give a full descriptive account of their linguistic features. Hence attention is concentrated on their principal characteristics.

The 'Siddur' texts

The group of texts with which we are here concerned consists of translations into Italian in Hebrew characters, from the original Hebrew text of the Siddur, the Daily Prayer Book, which should be distinguished

from the Machzor, the complete cycle of prayers for the year, of which there are no known early translations in Italian.⁶

The six manuscripts, A,B,C,D,E, and F, dating from the fifteenth century, and the three printed versions G,H and J, dating from the sixteenth century, form together a chronologically isolated phenomenon in that there is a significant break between these and the series of modern translations of the Siddur which begin early in the nineteenth century.⁷ The latter, apart from showing a radical difference in the style of translation, show a fundamental difference from the earlier texts in that they are written in Latin characters. There is, in short, no significant connection between the early translations and the modern ones.⁸

The Siddur translations have been somewhat unjustly neglected, for in comparison with other Judaeo-Italian texts which have received more attention, they are not as fragmentary as most of the Bible translations nor do they lend themselves as much to interpolations of an eclectic nature as do the glossaries.

None of these Siddur translations has ever been published in full, and the only serious study of them is the article by Cassuto.⁹ However, Berenblut quotes some terms from these texts, as does Blondheim, who utilizes A, B and H in his Essai d'un vocabulaire comparatif.

Even Cassuto, however, does not discuss certain aspects in detail, particularly textual features, such as the methods of transcription, being principally concerned to show the similarity of the translations by juxtaposing parallel passages and hence demonstrate that it is "la même traduction

tradition^helle". However, he reiterates his theories on Judaeo-Italian dialect and includes the Siddur translations as texts written in this dialect.

It is proposed here to examine more closely these translations of the Siddur in order to determine the nature of their language and thereby shed some light on the question of the language of the Judaeo-Italian texts as a whole.

Even when the flexible standards of non-Tuscan literary Italian in the fifteenth century are taken into account, it is clear that these translations are not in literary Italian. It is especially surprising to find a work published as late as 1561, text J, couched in such "uncouth" Italian.

An aspect of the problem which seems to bear out the theory of a Jewish dialect is the fact that although three of the MSS. were written in Tuscany, Emilia and the Marche respectively, they are not couched in three dialects appropriate to these areas, but all have strong dialectal similarities. How did the scribe of E, for instance, come to write such un-Tuscan language in the heart of Tuscany, unless he was writing in the Jewish koine?

However, can we be sure that this language is in fact a direct reflection of a spoken dialect? Moreover, is this a language peculiar to the Jews? Do the linguistic affinities between the texts stem from the fact that all the translators spoke the same dialect? Or are they due to copying? Hence the first problem to be resolved is the nature of the relationship of the MSS, for it is evident that on this the whole interpretation of the language of the texts rests.

To consider the six MS. translations alone, are we dealing, in fact,

with one translation in six versions, six related translations or six independent translations?

On the face of it they do not seem to be directly related by copying. No two texts are identical. There are differences in the wording of the prayers, in the arrangement and in the rubrics.¹⁰ The slight information which can be gleaned from one or two of the colophons seems to imply that these are independent translations.¹¹

On the other hand, there are striking similarities between the texts, and long passages which are well nigh identical as Cassuto has shown. From this it is evident that there must be a close link of some kind between the manuscripts.

It is this degree of similarity yet dissimilarity which led Cassuto to the conclusion that they were related in a peculiar way. He put forward the ingenious theory that a traditional oral translation of the Siddur, of ancient origin, must have existed in Italy. And it is this traditional oral translation which is the basis for these manuscripts, each scribe attempting to write down, in his own way and according to his own mode of speech, the oral translation which he knows from memory.

On this basis, the use of the koine would explain the similarity of language, and the existence of a traditional oral translation of the Siddur (as for the Bible) would explain the similarity of the version. The differences between the versions would then be accountable to the individual eccentricities of the scribe or the inevitable modifications which take place in oral tradition.

Plausible as this explanation is, a close examination of the texts

leads to a rather different explanation for the common features presented by these MSS. from that of Cassuto. It is that they are in fact related by copying and that their language is a literary product, based indeed on dialect but in a more complex way than that envisaged by Cassuto.

Yet, it is not at all easy to find conclusive evidence of, on the one hand, an oral, and, on the other, of a written source for these texts as can be seen in an analogous case explored by Debenedetti, in connection with the poems in the Memoriali bolognesi.¹² Admittedly there is, perhaps, room for discussion and it is very clear that Cassuto did not reach his conclusions lightly. It seems probable that he intended to include the detailed arguments behind this theory in the comprehensive work which he was evidently preparing, before the last war, on the Judaeo-Italian texts and their language.¹³

The fact that we are dealing here with a translation makes for special difficulties in deciding whether the source was oral or written. For had the work been an original composition instead of a translation, there would have been no doubt that all the manuscripts ultimately derived from a single original (or in rare cases, more than one original) and that they must, therefore, be related by copying. If, on the other hand, six more or less contemporary writers of the same cultural background prepare a translation in the same language, using the same methods and style, all the time adhering closely to the original by translating literally, then the results might be just such as we find in these six manuscripts. Hence in the case of translations of an identical text, in the absence of any conclusive evidence, it may be difficult to decide whether similarities are due merely

to coincidence because an identical original text is translated or to copying in the ordinary way, or to the texts all being derived from a common oral tradition.

Moreover, in this kind of text, where the original Hebrew is well known, the fact that two apparently closely related texts do not contain the same errors may be attributable to correction by the scribe. Even if we consider that the texts all belong to the same manuscript tradition, there seems every probability that it is a contaminated tradition.¹⁴ Furthermore, rearrangement of the material is common in the Siddur, so that apparent omissions and interpolations are not always accurate indications of independence.¹⁵

Despite these difficulties, sufficient evidence can be built up which is clearly indicative of a written, rather than an oral source, for these texts. However, before turning to the more positive evidence, let us consider the consequences of the oral tradition theory; for the more one considers the full implications of this theory, the more implausible it appears as an explanation of the affinities between the texts.

Although not all the MSS. can be dated accurately, probably none of them was drawn up later than the second half of the fifteenth century.¹⁶ Since that time, apart from the inevitable loss of MSS. with the passage of time, large numbers of Hebrew texts have been destroyed in Italy (usually in order to be sure of destroying copies of the Talmud), especially in the second half of the sixteenth century.¹⁷ Moreover, works of relatively slight account, such as this Siddur in its strange garb of Italian in Hebrew

characters, or works in daily use which tend to get worn out (several of these MSS. have either the first or last part, or both, missing - and this applies to most copies of the printed versions) tend not to be preserved.

Hence, if six MSS. have survived these vicissitudes, it is fairly probable that these represent only the fortunate survivors of a larger number of texts circulating in the fifteenth century. If we were to assume that these MSS. were independent records of an oral translation, this would mean that each scribe was somehow so culturally isolated as never to have had the opportunity of using one of the many copies already available. Yet the concept of an oral tradition itself implies a common fund of knowledge; this is emphasised by the scribes' ability to write a long and complicated work in extremely similar terms. Moreover, the texts whose provenance is known were not produced in widely different parts of Italy, but all roughly within the area comprising the Papal States.

On the other hand, if they knew of the existence of these copies, we would have to assume that they chose to ignore them, despite the traditional abhorrence of writing liturgical works from memory instead of copying them exactly from exemplars in order to avoid corruption.¹⁸ Moreover, we would have to believe that such was the force, uniformity and accuracy of the oral tradition that two quite independent writers could produce a translation from the Hebrew original, based only on the memory of an oral translation, with results which coincide as closely as the following extracts. (These are taken from MSS. A and B which, in fact, in much of their text and in most external features are perhaps the two of the six most different from each other.¹⁹)

Text A:²⁰ Esera se intenènò intenereti ali komanamenti mei ke io

Text B:²¹ Esera seskoltano skoltarete alekomanamente mee ki io

A. komano avoi oje adamare adomededh lodedh vostro aservire esi

B. komanno voi oje adamare domeded ded vošto e asirvire esso

A. kon tuto lukore vostro ekuntuto lanimo vostro edaraio laploja

B. kontuto lokore vošto ekontuto lanemo vošto edarajo lapjoja

A. de latera vostra nelo tenpo suo primoteka e tardiva e rekoljarai

B. delatera boštra nelotenpo suo primotiko etardio e arikoljerai

A. lulavore tuo e lumusto tuo e loljo tuo e daraio erba nelo kanpo

B. lolavore tuo elomošto tuo elolejo tuo edarajo erba nelo kanpo

A. tuo perla bestia toa e manekarai e satolarate. Guardetivi avoi

B. tuo per laveštia toa emanekarai esatolarajte. Guardate avoje

A. in quano sesimoniska lukore vostro egesareti e servireti dei altre

B. non quano sesimoniska lokore vošto egeseriteve eserverete adei altre

A. esalutareti aesi e adirarase loferore de domededh invoi

B. esalutarete aese e adirarase lofurore dedomeded envoe

A. estrenjera liçeli enon sera ploja e latera non dara lu lavore

B. eštrenjera leçe le enon sera pjoja elatera non dara lolavore

A. suo e deperderiteve inaina desopro latera bona ke domededh

B. suo edeperdereteve inajna dadesopre latera bona ke domeded

A. da avoi e poneriti li paravoli mei questi sopra lukore vostro

B. dao avoje efonerete leparaole mee quešte sopra lokore vošto

A. esopre lanimo vostro e legareti esi aseno sopra alimane vostri

B. esopre lanemo vošto e legarete ese aseno sopra lamano voštra

- A. eserano atefilim infra lokli vostri e nešeriti esi ali tilioli
B. eserano a tefilin enfra lokle voštre enešerete ese alefiljoli
A. vostri a'avelare inesi nelo sedere tuo nelacasa toa e neluire
B. voštre a'avelare enese nelosedere tuo nelacasa toa nelojire
A. tuo per lavia e nelukolkare tuo e nelulevare tuo escriverai
B. tuo per lavia nelo kolkare tuo enelolevare tuo escriverai
A. esi sopra alibalistratiki dela casa toa eneli porti toi.
B. essi sopra lebalištrateke delacasa toa edeleporte toi.

Most of the manuscripts have evidently been carefully prepared, for they are for the most part finely written in a formal hand and C has illuminated initials²² while E has an elaborately decorated initial page. Corrections and errors are relatively infrequent and they are thus far from having the appearance of a text jotted down from memory, and do not show signs of those hesitations and second thoughts which one would expect to find in a text produced in this way. It might perhaps be objected that the scribe could have himself first prepared a rough draft from which to copy a meticulous final version. But in a text of two or three hundred pages this would be an extremely expensive and laborious procedure and one which would not recommend itself to the scribe working professionally for a patron (as is the case in at least two of the texts and, indeed, probably in all of them) and whose remuneration was usually slight.²³ And as the scribe's intention was clearly not to produce an entirely original translation (as can be seen from the results) he had no good reason to undertake the laborious task of preparing for himself an exemplar when there were already texts available to copy from.

Apart from this negative evidence which makes it improbable that these six manuscripts are independent records of an oral tradition, let us turn to the evidence which points to a much closer relationship.

In his article Cassuto includes a passage from C and one from E as further illustration that, although independent works, they both derive from the same traditional oral translation.²⁴ But despite differences between the two texts, a careful examination leads rather to the conclusion that their affinities stem from a much simpler cause: that they were both written by the same scribe. A first comparison of all six manuscripts reveals a strong similarity of the handwriting of C and E, both in the square characters which are used in the headings, and in the Italian rabbinic characters which are used for most of the text.²⁵ However, it is well to be cautious when identifying fifteenth century Italian rabbinic script for it is often so uniform that it is difficult to discern individual idiosyncracies.²⁶ One has only to examine one or two other Hebrew manuscripts of the same period written in Italy to be diffident about taking the handwriting as proof in itself that the scribe is the same in both cases.²⁷

Although the formation and spacing of the letters and the strokes of the pen are extremely similar, one notices in text C, especially in the lamed, a certain sloping of the letters whereas E has an extremely vertical style. Another doubt is raised by the difference of wording between the two texts (especially in the rubrics.) Moreover, in certain distinct features the systems of transcription, although in general extremely close, are not identical.²⁸

Nevertheless, the doubts aroused by these discrepancies (which I shall

attempt to account for below) are soon dispelled by the further evidence in favour of the same scribe having written both MSS.

All six MSS. are written entirely in Hebrew characters, mostly in the Italian language, but with some words or phrases in the Hebrew language. The beginning of each prayer or section of the service is clearly distinguished from the rest of the text by spacing and by the much larger lettering used for the initial word or words, thus forming a kind of "title". In most cases these titles are further differentiated by being written in square characters, whereas the text itself is continued in Italian rabbinic characters.²⁹ In manuscripts D and F these titles are formed by the first words of the Italian translation, for apart from odd words (almost exclusively proper nouns) occurring sporadically, there is no Hebrew language in these MSS. B also does not usually employ Hebrew language in the titles.³⁰ A, C and E, however, have the titles in Hebrew; but A is quite distinct from C and E in that the entire text, not only the titles, is written in square characters. Thus, as far as the titles are concerned only two texts are alike in having the titles in the Hebrew language and in square characters, with the rest of the text in Italian and in rabbinic characters; these two texts are C and E.

In these two MSS., not only are the titles composed in the same way in Hebrew but the wording itself of the titles is extremely close, usually identical. As mentioned above, the titles are formed by the first word or words of the text. There is considerable variation from manuscript to manuscript, and to a lesser extent from one part of the same manuscript to another, as to the exact number of words included. Usually it is only

PLATE V

Text E (Parma 1989),
part of f. 62b (greatly enlarged).

PLATE VI

Text C, f. 36b (actual size).

ברוך

יְיָ מִשְׁדֵּר נֶתָן מִנֵּן

מִנְחָה

בְּרִיטָה רִנְיָה דִּתְּ

קִרְיָנוּ דִּיפִסֵּס מִלֵּל פִּנְפִּיל סִמְחָה יִשְׂרָאֵל קִי
קִרְיָנוּ פִּמְחִי לִמְחִי נֵץ מִתְקַדְּבֵי קִמְבֹּסָה

ברוך

יְיָ מִשְׁדֵּר נֶתָן מִנֵּן

מִנְחָה לְעַמּוֹל

בְּרִיטָה רִנְיָה דִּתְּ

קִרְיָנוּ דִּיפִסֵּס מִלֵּל פִּנְפִּיל סִמְחָה יִשְׂרָאֵל קִי

קִרְיָנוּ פִּמְחִי לִמְחִי נֵץ מִתְקַדְּבֵי קִמְבֹּסָה

נִלְמָה רִנְיָה לְמִפְרֵבֵּלָה סִמְחָה בִּנְיָמִן

קִי פִּמְחִי לִמְחִי פִּיר מִנְחָה דִּמְחִי סִדְרָה

סִמְחָה סִמְחָה רִנְיָה דִּתְּ נִשְׁט

נִשְׁטֵרֵן קִנְיָנוּ קִנְיָנוּ סִדְרָה קִנְיָנוּ פִּטְרָה

נִשְׁטֵרֵן נֵץ לְמִסָּה נִשְׁטֵרֵן מִנְחָה מִנְחָה

מִפְרֵבֵּלָה נִשְׁטֵרֵן מִפְרֵבֵּלָה קִנְיָנוּ לֵן

לִקְרָה נִשְׁטֵרֵן מִמִּסֵּן מִי מִיָּה מִיָּה

מִנְחָה לִיבְרִיָּה סִמְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה

לִקְרָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה סִמְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה

סִמְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה סִמְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה

מִנְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה

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מִנְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה מִנְחָה

the first word, or the first two, which make up the title, but in some cases it includes as many as five or six words. The degree of coincidence in this respect between C and E is very great in comparison with the other manuscripts. Moreover, in the punctuation of these Hebrew titles such 'arbitrary' signs as rapheh and daghes, which are used somewhat erratically in all the texts, coincide in usage almost exactly in C and E.³¹

Most of the texts use some kind of device to fill in a short line and so create an even area of writing not only on the right-hand margin but on the left-hand side of the page too. A traditional Hebrew device is the litterae dilatabiles, formed by elongating the horizontal strokes of the letters so that they occupy the space of two or three normal letters. Some extreme examples occur in B:³² and F uses this device regularly. Another device in the texts is a hyphen at the end of the line, but this does not occur in C and E. These two texts adopt exactly the same methods to fill in the line. The litterae dilatabiles are used infrequently and very modestly, rarely attaining the width of even two letters.³³ C and E also employ a variety of signs made up of strokes similar to those composing the normal letters, but which cannot be mistaken for letters. In both texts the commonest form of sign is a kind of yodh with a plume. All the texts sometimes use a part of the initial word of the following line without the vowel points; but even in this case C and E coincide in always having the typical plume on the last letter of the line, indicating that it is not to be read as a normal word. This is not found in the other texts.³⁴

Although the initial words of C are finely decorated in blue, purple and red, whereas those of E are not, in both texts the rubrics are enclosed

PLATE VII

Text C, f. 35a (actual size).
(For comparison with PLATE VIII.)

הי טושה לופירא סומה קי קרימבו דמ
דנמדת מפגרי

מיקניל קיסדי טרובמג מסקנל
טנג ריספגרי מריי מבוקה קול
חון קטשט ברק קטבול קנה
מלטה מיגוי טן סיקיט קיטוקה
מריי מלחון

בורר

מתה יין מלהיג
בטריט טו דומדת
רית גטטרז מי

רית דלפטי גטטרי רית דמברהס
מרת ריינחק מרת ריעקב רית גרני
במדת מיטמדת רית מלטי סימור
מקניטמטרי דעיל מיטידה קי ל
מיסקנהימה ליטרה קולמפממבולה

PLATE VIII

Text E, f. 63a (greatly enlarged).

מִיָּמֵי קִנְיָנִי קִי ק מִדְּפִי־מַטְמֵי דְגִבְיָנִי
מִדְּמִדַּת מַפְרִי־סִי מִדְּמִדַּת דִּית נְטִיטָה
לִמְדֵי מִי מִי־נִגְטֵי מִפְּחֵי מִדְּטֹנֵי דִילָה
מִנְטִילָה סֹמָה מִי לִדְמִטֹנֵי דְלֹפֹפֹלֹ סו
סֹמָה יִשְׁדִּי־ל קָבֹסָה דִי נִלְמִדֵי סֹמָה
פִיר פִּמְדֵי מַסְפִּדֵי מַטְמֵי לִי פֹפֹלִי דִילָה
טִיָּה קִי דְמִדַּת מִי־סו מִי לִדְיִת מִי־נִגְטֵי
פִלֵּה

מִי לִנְשִׁבַּת מִדִּי־מִמֵּי קֹמִי מִה פִרְנֵי
פֹרְטִיטָה לִשְׁיָה קֹמִי־נִי יִנְטִי לֵה דֹבִי
לִנְשִׁבַּת־מִי סִנְטֵי מִי־נִלְקֹן דִּדִּי יִפִּי
יִשְׁדִּי־ל סִימָה לִבְרִיטָה לִנְטִי טֹמָה
מִלְחָה דִי־יִי קִנְיָנִי מִמֹּמֹד

בְּשִׁנֹּתָי מִתֵּי טִימֹד
מִדְּדִי נִלֹן טִימֹדִי

לִדְדִי

within a linear decorative frame in black ink, evidently drawn by the scribe himself, which divides them off from the text of the prayers. These show unmistakably the same style in both texts.³⁵

The general layout and appearance of the page, and the relationship of the margins, titles, rubrics and text are very much the same in both MSS.

Finally, there are two features of decisive importance. Firstly, the number of lines to a page: of the six MSS, B has 16 and D has 13. A and F both have 17 lines to a page, but are otherwise very different in most respects. C and E both have 15 lines to a page; and these are spaced in the same manner, as far as can be judged. Secondly, the page dimensions of C and E are identical, to within a quarter of an inch in both directions.³⁶

From the foregoing, there can no longer be any doubt that these two texts, far from being unrelated except by the tenuous thread of oral tradition, were in fact written by the same scribe.

Yet there are some distinct differences, as mentioned above, to be accounted for, apart from the errors that one might expect even in a text copied by the scribe from his own work. One rubric, for instance, is twice as long in one text as in the other, in another rubric the wording is quite different in the two texts, while a difference is to be seen in the method of transcribing the palatal l.³⁷

In C (f.35a) we find the following rubric:³⁸

E quelli che se ritrovano a scola ponno responnere e dire a bucca collo chazan questo baruch che ne veo qua. Altra mente non se dice, che tocca dire a lo chazan.

In E (f. 61a) the same instructions are rendered thus:

Questa berachà tocca a dire allo chazan, e chi vo dire a bocca pò. Altra mente non se dice, e questa è.

The close connection between the two is unmistakeable, as is shown by the first part of the second sentence. But what we find here is that the scribe has felt much more free to edit the text than he does in the prayers. For the second version, although not very elegantly phrased, is a distinct improvement on the first. The mention of the synagogue (scola) is unnecessary if there is a cantor (chazan), because this in itself indicates a communal service. The second version also omits a clumsy repetition. Berachà ('benediction') is a more correct term than baruch ('blessed'), which is simply the first word of the benediction. "E questa è" is more explicit, though no more stylish, than "che ne veo qua".

Similar factors can be seen in the other rubric referred to above.

C reads (f. 33b):

Apri, e dice perfine a "Benedetto tu Domededh lo Dedh santo"

E poi dice "Umeahavatach";

whereas E has (f. 59b):

E comença "Adonai sefatai", e dice fine a "Benedetto Domededh lo Dedh santo". E poi dice così:

Here "Apri" is anything but a clear instruction, and the last sentence of the C rubric is both misleading and unnecessary as Umeahavatach follows on the rubric. "E poi dice così" is therefore all that is necessary.

The difference in the sign for l' may be attributed to the unsatis-

factoriness of that used by C. Number 66 in the Table is ambiguous, since the frequent use of 42, 43, 54 and 55 for the vowel e make it possible to read 66 as le instead of the l' which is intended. Apparently aware of this, the scribe when writing E has stuck consistently to the unambiguous 67 which already occurs on rare occasions in C.

From these examples it can be seen that the differences between the two MSS. are in the nature of improvements, which in itself indicates a close relationship between the two; they in no way undermine the conclusion that both were written by the same scribe. In fact they constitute a basis for an approximate dating of C; for as E shows improvements over C it must be the later of the two. From the difference in the slope of the handwriting it seems probable that an appreciable time gap separates the two texts. C was written, then, well before 1484. The MS. has formerly been assessed as "fifteenth century, possibly late fourteenth century."³⁹

It seems probable, however, that E was not directly copied from C, but both derive from a common exemplar. In both cases, the scribe improved slightly on his exemplar, mainly in the rubrics, but made more modifications in the later copy E.⁴⁰

The other four manuscripts, although not as close as C and E, are not original translations either. There are many passages which closely coincide and they all show evidence of copying. They contain the kind of errors which can only occur when copying from a written exemplar. Moreover, we have to show that not only are C and E written by the same scribe, but that these are not his original compilation either; in other words that these are also copies.

Certain errors are caused by homaeoteleuton or dittography - unequivocal indications of copying from a written text. A particularly severe, erroneous repetition occurs in A, engendered by the repetition of an initial word. The lines in question read as follows (the ditto-graph is underlined):

'Tu si eso lu Deth e altri che ti nun e a noi re
escunperatore e aiutatore e salvatore escunperatore
e aiutatore e salvatore escunperatore escanpatore
guvernatore e cordoljatore in one tenpo di angusti'

(A, f.42b, 12-17)

On the last line of f.40a and the first of the following page another mistake occurs of this kind (again underlined) this time anticipating the phrase which follows it:

'... tuto Jisrael che santef~~e~~cano lu śabat nome tuo
benedeto tu Domedeth che santefeca lu śabat'

There is also in A a feature of the system of transcription which could only have arisen as a result of a slight modification on the scribe's part of an element already existing in a written text. This feature also sheds light on the actual process whereby two apparently disparate features in different texts (i.e. 68 and 69 in the Table⁴¹), which make it difficult to see how one could be derived from the other by copying, are in fact closely linked.

The feature in question is the symbol used for s before t. In 68 it is a samech, whereas in 69 it is a shin (or sin, according to the pointing).

This seems to indicate two types of pronunciation, as in questo and questo. It should be noted that where shin is used in this way, it occurs only before t and not any other consonant. A uses shin; but in this case it is pointed as a sin, indicating a pronunciation st. This anomaly can only be explained as a result of copying. The scribe has faithfully copied the shin from an exemplar, but finding it unpointed (as it usually is, e.g. in C) he has assumed that it must be read as a sin and has pointed it accordingly in order to distinguish it from shin (which he points as shin in appropriate words, such as seljere). This can be the only explanation, for had he written the text without reference to an exemplar, he would have used samech in this position, as he does for s in all other positions.

This shows, firstly, that A must be a copy, and secondly, how the shin of texts of the E type may well be linked to the samech of the D type by the 'transitional' stage of A.

In C (f. 28b) we find the word aquello, 'a quello', repeated erroneously in the following phrase: "Laoda abonemo a quello che cabalca ne li çeli e a quello che è glorefecato en redunança de santi", where the second aquello has been left unpointed and the correction alodeth, 'al Dio', inserted in the margin. The correct word and the erroneous one are exactly a line of writing apart. Thus this error was almost certainly induced by copying from another text where the aquello occurred at the beginning of a line.⁴²

Although it is impossible to establish anything like a stemma for these MSS, as is evident from the complexities of the MS. tradition discussed above, yet some kind of order of dependence may be determined. Despite the very different vowel structure between E and A, which will be

PLATE IX

Text B (B.M. Or.2443),
f. 43b (actual size).

אֶת־כַּמֶּרֶי אֶכְבֹּדֶי־אִי אֶסְבִּי־עַקְרֵי סוֹפְרֵי טוֹן
טוֹטֵי פֶרְאוֹדֵי רֶקֶב־טִי אֶרְגֵּל־אוֹדֵי קִירֵי־רֶחֶל
פִּילִיִן רִישֵׁי כִידָן טוֹמֹן מוֹכֶטֶן טוֹמֹן "

סִימָה לַמַּעֲרֵטֶן לֹכֹכֵי טוֹמֹן אֶסִּיל

אֶסִּיכְפֶּרִי רִי־טוֹטֶרֶן רִיד־רִי־גֶרֶמֶט אֶסְכֶּטֶן
טֶל־יִכְלִי אִי טֶל־טִירָה קִי אֶטִי אִי־כִילוֹ רֹקֶמֶדֶר
רִיד־טוֹטֶרֶן רִיד־רֶלֶפֶטֶרִי טוֹטֶרֶי קֶטֶטֶן אִי
לַמַּוֶּדֶה לַמַּוֶּדֶה אִי קֶטֶטֶן כְּטֶר־טוֹטֶן אִי לַמַּוֶּדֶה
פֶּרֶט־יִכֹּט אִי אִישׁוֹרִי־טוֹמֶר־מָה אֶסִּיכְפֶּרִי
כְּטֶר־יִכְלִי־טוֹטֶר־מָה אִישׁוֹרִי־טוֹטֶר־מָה לַמַּוֶּדֶה אִי
גֶלֶר־מָה סְבִיבִי־עַקְרֵי־מִקְטֵי אִי אִישׁוֹרִי־מֹן
רֶכֶן פִּי אֶסִּיכְפֶּרִי כְּטֶר־טוֹטֶן כִּי טוֹן רֹקֶמֶדֶר
רִי־לַמַּעֲרֵטֶן טֶל־לַמַּוֶּדֶה רִיד־רֶלֶמֶן
סִיכִי־וֹרִי רֶמֶר־וִוִּילִי קִישִׁילִי טֶל־קֶטֶר־רִיד־לֵל
קֶטֶר־רִי־רִיד וִיכֶן אֶסִּיכְפֶּרִי מֶכֶן "

קוֹיִשְׁטֵן אִי לֹיִזְכֶּר רֶלֶפֶטֶר "

גֶּרֶמֶטֶר

discussed below, these two texts follow each other in minute detail very closely for long passages (except for certain vowels). Because of the 'transitional' form of shin, it seems unlikely that E derives from A, but rather the reverse. E certainly seems the more correct text. At the same time A could not have derived its vowel structure directly from the complete text of E (i.e. the pointed text). So these two texts are probably copies of a common exemplar. C and E, although written by the same scribe, surprisingly agree less often in small details than do A and E, although agreeing in much greater measure in the system of transcription, particularly the pointing. Hence it is probable that these two texts are not copied one from the other but are also both copies of the same exemplar. Thus A, C and E are probably three copies of a single exemplar. That there is a close relation between A and B is apparent from the marginal corrections in B. Exactly what that relationship is, is more difficult to determine. As mentioned above, these two texts differ frequently in the version, while coinciding very closely for long passages.⁴³ Besides this though, marginal corrections in B have been made evidently not because of simple errors or omissions (although a number of the corrections are of this type) but because a different word or phrase has been substituted in the margin for the one originally written.

However in these modifications to the text they have been altered to coincide pretty closely with text A. This looks, then, as though a scribe in preparing a third text has based his copy on B, which he has first collated with A or a text very much like it. F is probably much more distantly related, although also a copy. It cannot be a source for

the texts mentioned as it was written later than at least two of them. D seems also to be more distantly related, although not close to F. A good deal of improvisation in orthography would have been inevitable if these texts had been committed from memory. However, the subtleties in the systems of transcription evident in the Siddur MSS, shown in chapter IV above, indicate that the system of spelling evolved over a period of time. There is evidence of common orthographic habits such as can only have been acquired by reading other Judaeo-Italian texts, the bulk of which must have been translations of the Bible and the Prayer Book.⁴⁴ These common orthographic habits can best be seen in contrast with a text such as L which stands right outside the development.

Hence we may conclude that the similarities between these six MSS. are not the result of the six scribes having a common dialect and attempting to record an oral tradition, but are the result of copying, i.e. the six MSS. all derive from the same original. Indeed, as will be seen below, the linguistic coincidence between the texts is not as great as has been suggested and is consistent with the type of modifications which take place when a text is copied outside its place of composition.

When the texts are seen in this light, a number of features may be better explained.

The texts cannot be taken at their face value as a record of spoken dialect, but ^{only} as the result of a manuscript tradition.

Ascoli perhaps saw most clearly the nature of texts such as these by talking of 'stratification'.⁴⁵ He was referring to the Maqré Dardeqé which, being a glossary and therefore containing no continuous prose but

only individual words, lends itself to interpolations in a manner which can be seen from the example of the glossary of philosophical terms by Yehudah Romano mentioned below.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, stratification is what characterises the language of the Siddurim too, in the sense that what we have is a text in which later modifications and substitutions have taken place. Certainly the phonetic structure of the original has undergone change, particularly in the vowels.

Nevertheless, certain Italian dialect features are clearly discernible in these texts. Do they indicate the place of composition of the original? Certain features are common to all the manuscripts, whereas others show considerable variation. The most striking characteristic common to all the texts is the development ND > nn; this takes us to the Central-Southern area of Italy, south of a line from Orbetello to Ancona.

Other features, such as the absence of any sign of PL > kj (the texts have consistently plu or più, etc.) indicate the central rather than the Southern part of this area.

Central Italy (excluding Tuscany, but comprising Lazio, Umbria and the Marche and part of the Abruzzi) is an area whose dialects have many features in common, especially those limited features which appear in written texts. Thus the exact provenance of some of the best known texts written in some part of this area is a matter of some dispute.⁴⁷

Moreover, just at those points where the consonants might be an invaluable aid, the Hebrew text is disconcertingly ambiguous, e.g. does C really intend a vucca (beth and rapheh) and not a bucca? For at other points of the text it is quite clear that the rapheh has been accidentally omitted or

inserted in the wrong place.⁴⁸ That the texts show conservation of j is rendered very uncertain by the difficulty of representing ġ satisfactorily in Hebrew characters, the closest approximation (without recourse to a key or explanation) being the symbol used for j.⁴⁹

The vowels present special problems. Their unusual features are not so much of the type one might expect in this area of Italy, such as the distinction between final -o and -u, or of metaphony before -i and u, but are rather of the type which seem to present metaplasms of various kinds such as li pecora, la omeni, la morteletada, feminine plurals of the first declension in -i, masculine plurals in -e, and other anomalies, distributed with various degrees of consistency.

It would be only too easy to take these as features of a special dialect, Judaeo-Italian dialect in fact. But to what extent are these genuine dialectal features? What is the real source of the vowel structure presented by the texts?

The effects of the use of the Hebrew alphabet must not be underestimated in explaining the present aspect of the texts. In particular the division of Hebrew writing into two quite separable systems, one for the consonants and another for the vowels, with the matres lectionis partaking of both, produces different results, when modifications are introduced into the text, from those occurring when the Latin alphabet is used.

Radical change in the vowel structure of normal Italian texts, introduced by copyists, is well known, notably in the case of the Sicilian poets.⁵⁰ However, the factors involved in a text written in Hebrew characters are rather different.

An anomaly of the type mentioned above provides a clue to the

genesis of the vowels. On f.44b of A we find:

"e chi pù fare L'operi toi,"⁵¹ which is clearly "e chi pùò fare le opere tue". At first sight the pù looks like an unusual closing of the vowel. But it is evidently just a copyist's error, for the line above has: "e chi se pò adoguagliare a ti". The point is that the consonants are the same in both cases, and the scribe, simply by pointing the mater lectionis in the wrong place, through inattention or incomprehension, has created what looks like a genuine verb form. This is a simple case because here it is obvious that an error is involved; but it points to two conclusions. Firstly that the vowels can and do undergo change of this kind quite easily.⁵² Secondly, where the reason for unusual features is not as obvious as it is in this case, some of the vowels may well look like genuine dialect features, whereas they are simply the result of incorrect interpretation of the consonantal text, especially the matres lectionis. This would affect particularly u and o (mater lectionis: waw), e and i (mater lectionis: yodh). This kind of situation is clearly the result of the essential dichotomy between the consonantal and vowel signs.

Indeed many features of the vowel structure lead to the conclusion either that the original translation was written as a purely consonantal text, or that, if it was pointed, the vowels were not copied in the same way as the consonants and were thus more susceptible to modification. So separate were the two elements of Hebrew writing that it was frequent practice in the Middle Ages for the scribe (sofer) to write out the full consonantal text and then entrust the text to a pointer (naqdan) who would supply the vowel points, particularly in the case of important works such as Bible codices.⁵³ So that MSS. are known with a double colophon, one

written by the sofer the other by the naqdan.⁵⁴ It is not suggested here that the Siddur texts were all in fact composed in this way.⁵⁵ But this fact underlines the independence of the two functions.

The two MSS of the Elegy show clearly these two stages of composition of the text, which are not evident from the Siddur MSS themselves. It is clear from the Elegy texts that the original must have been unpointed, otherwise the scribe of P would have inserted the pointing as he has done for the normal Hebrew text which surrounds the poem in the machzor in which it is contained. If we did not have the evidence of the Elegy it would indeed be difficult to find any clue from the extant MSS. of the Siddur that they could have originally been composed only as a consonantal text.

Once this fact is established the clues do become clear in the shape of the wide use made of matres lectionis. We have shown⁵⁶ that there is a strong tendency to reduce these when a text is transformed from a consonantal to a pointed version. Clearly the matres lectionis are at best only an ambiguous guide and no substitute for the vowel points proper. But what is more important is that they are quite useless, indeed something of an encumbrance, in a fully pointed text. Thus if the scribe had set out to record speech by means of a fully pointed spelling system he would have used far fewer matres lectionis than appear in all the Siddur MSS. That they are not essential for clarity is illustrated by the spellings adopted by modern Hebrew for twentieth century objects such as telephone. This word is spelt $\int 1970$, i.e. without any matres lectionis in the first two vowels.

From chapter IV it can be seen that the vowel e, although re-

presented in a variety of ways in the six L S, is regularly followed by a yodh⁵⁷; the only exception of any note is that in some texts the yodh is often omitted when the e is in an initial syllable.⁵⁸ Even more remarkably, almost every o vowel throughout these texts is accompanied by a waw.⁵⁹

The use of the yodh and waw so consistently and regularly where their presence is really quite unnecessary also is unaccountable if the texts were drafted in the first place with the intention of inserting all the vowels, but would, on the other hand, be necessary in a purely consonantal text.

Even when the original had become partly or fully pointed, there is good reason to believe that the vowel points were not necessarily copied in the same way as the consonantal text. To copy a consonantal text, (the majority of Hebrew texts are unpointed) is a task strictly comparable to the work involved in copying a text in Latin characters. On the other hand, to copy every point in a MS. of the Siddur type, where there were no guiding standards,⁶⁰ would have been extremely laborious; and one must bear in mind that once the consonantal text was written the MS. was perfectly readable without pointing. It is probable then that in order to fill in the vowel points, the scribe, although perhaps referring occasionally to his exemplar, tended rather to read the text already written and fill in the vowels as they were indicated by this. In this way the vowel structure could be modified quite radically, and as a result of partial consultation of the exemplar and partial logical completing of the consonantal text the vowel structure could easily become eclectic or erratic. (This would explain why A and E are so close in the consonantal text, but so different

PLATE X

Text A (B.M. Or. 74),
f. 41a (actual size),
showing the pointing of the first
nagdan in text, rubric and
Hebrew title.

אֲדוֹמֶת דִּית נִשְׁטוּר לֹאדִי אִי לֹאנְטִי ז
 אֶפְאֲרִי לֹאדִי שׁוֹנֵי דִּילֵח אֶנְיִלֵּח קוֹאח אִי
 לֹאדִי שׁוֹנֵי דִּילֵכְפֹּלֵר סוֹאז יִשְׂרָאֵל קְבֹסֶח
 דִּי נִלֹּאדִי סוֹאח פִּיר פֶּאֲרִי אֶסְפִּירִי אֶטוֹטִי
 לִי פֹפֹלִי דִּילֵח טִירֵח קִי דוֹמֶת אִיסוֹ אִי
 לִדִּית אִינוֹמ פֶּלֶר

לִשְׁמֵת אֲדִימֵאִי קוֹמִי אַח פִּירֶטֶט לִשְׁרֵח ק
 קוֹאטִי זִנְיִי לֵח דוֹכִי דִּיעִי לִנְעִי דִּיאֵז סִנְטוֹ ז
 אִיטִלְקוֹ דִּירִי יִשְׁמֵח סִיאֵח לֹאדִי אִיסוֹ לִנְעִי
 סוֹאז אֲלֵדִיח דִּיעִי קִישְׁטוֹ קִימֹר דִּי

לִדִּיר בִּשְׁמֵתוֹ אֲדוֹר מִלֵּךְ טִירֵמֶט
 דִּי סוֹאז לִימִירִי
 סוֹאז דִּינְנִיעִי אֲבִימֵלֵךְ אִי קִנְאֵכִי אִיסוֹ ז
 אִיִּסִימִי בְּנִדִּירֵאִיו אֲדוֹמֶת אִינוֹמ
 טִינְפֹו קוֹנְטִינְכֹו לִלְכֹּדֵח סוֹאח נִלֹּאבִיחֵח

PLATE XI

Text A, f. 107a, showing unpointed
Hebrew title, unpointed Italian
rubric (except for the word siano),
and the pointing, in the text, of
the second nagdan.

בספר חיים

אמליכה דחטא אי

בינדיענע אי פאצי

אי גומירנו בונ אי סלביאנע אי קונעלצא

ני אי גראצאח אי מיסיריקאדיאח סאמו

ארינקורדאטי אסיאמו איסקריטי דענני

רטי נואי איטוטו לופולו טואו ישראל

אויטא אי אפאצי בנדיטו טו דומרת קן

בנדיצי לופולו סואו ישראל אנפאצי

עושה שלום כדומיו וכו

אי פורמשי אפה עושה שלום יואי ריע סיאנו א

אפליניטו לידיטי דלכוקח מיאה איפורניש איפוא

רייע עלינו לשבח אסאי שטת ריע טרוך יל אשר

מנחה סיט ריעי יהי יל אהיט וכו

אי לאדימאע דראש השטת סידיעו הפלה קומי ל

לטריו מועדים סאי שטת ריע לינער רשבת סינו

in the vowels.)

Text A is particularly instructive in this respect. The curious condition of this text has not hitherto been suspected, as can be seen from Margolioth's description of it as having "vowel points throughout".⁶¹ This is not quite accurate; the first part of the MS. is fully pointed, but a central section has only the consonantal text. Later in the MS. the vowels reappear, but this time in a different hand, although the consonants are in the same hand throughout the MS. This difference is emphasised by the absence of the methegh in the pointing by the second hand although it is used constantly in the earlier part of the MS. Finally the first pointer reappears at the end of the MS.⁶² What has evidently happened is that the original scribe has written the whole consonantal text, then pointed part of it, leaving the rest incomplete. A second pointer has then filled in the vowels in a large part of the text but failed to complete the task. This shows that the whole consonantal text was completed before any pointing was added, and that it is quite possible for the latter to be added at a much later stage and by a different person.⁶³

In text A then, a single sofer has produced the whole consonantal text but the pointing was added by two different nagdanim, the first of whom understood better the style of the consonantal text and was probably the sofer himself. Even this first nagdan, however, illustrates the peculiar history of the vocalisation of the text.

In the first few pages, there is considerable oscillation between u and o in certain words, particularly in the masculine singular forms of the possessive adjective and definite article. Then on ff. 8b - 9a we

find (in order of occurrence): tuu, tuu, tuo, tuu, tuu, tuu, tuo, tuo, tuo, tuo. But after this in the MS we find regularly tuo. In contrast, the forms toa and toi are constant throughout the MS. At about the point of 'transition' we find a form written with ï, i.e. both u and o at the same time!

The definite article presents a similar kind of oscillation in the earlier part of the MS. We find alternation between lu and lo with a preference for the former. On ff. 8b - 11a, the masculine definite articles are: (8b) lo, lo, (9a) lo, lo, a waw with both points (twice), lu, lo, (9b) lo, lo, lo, lo, lu, lo, lu, lu, lo, (10a) lu, lu, lu, lo, lu, (10b) lu, lu, (11a) lo, lu; but by f. 37b: lu, lu, lu, and 38a, lu, lu, lu, lu, lu etc; and in the remainder of the MS the form lu is maintained as constant. From about f. 37b then, we get a more regular pattern. The definite article lu and the protonic vowel tends to u rather than o, e.g. curdoljare, and munepica, valenta, hunore; whereas the final vowel tends constantly to o rather than u. This sometimes affects tonic vowels too, e.g. satula, alura and even en luco (= loco!).

It looks as though either the naqdan was attempting to "correct" the manuscript at the beginning, but tired of the attempt soon after and copied the text before him, or he was unsure of the correct vowels, finally settling for lu and tuo. The matres lectionis which are pointed both ways at the same time show his hesitation and confusion and explain why he abandoned the attempt to "improve" the text. The process of following the consonantal text can be seen from f. 11a, where the desiderato lacks a yodh in the first syllable, hence the pointer; apparently somewhat perplexed,

has at first attempted to supply a vowel which can stand without a yodh and made it dosiderato, but then he has added a shewa which would make it something like desiderato. The process of following the consonantal text rather than a linguistic standard is partly responsible for a much more radical type of vowel change than the mere substitution of o for u, and vice versa, i.e. the substitution of o for i, or vice versa (or e for u etc.). At first sight, it would seem that in infra locli tuo, (r. 9b.) we have an unusual but genuinely dialectal metaplasm, i.e. tuo as masculine plural (apocopation of tuoi?), for it would seem impossible for this to be simply a slip for toi since there are no ^{fewer} ~~less~~ than three differences in the spelling of these two words ($\text{יִלְלוּ} = \text{tuo}$, $\text{יִלְלוּ} = \text{toi}$). However, if we take into account the two separate stages in the writing of the text, outlined above, it becomes clear that a single slip on the part of the sofer has transformed toi into tuo. In the Hebrew alphabet it is precisely the matres lectionis which represent the two vowels o and i (waw and yodh respectively) which are amongst the letters most easily mistaken for each other. In the fifteenth century Italian rabbinic, the only difference between these two letters is the slightly longer stem of the waw. (There are also other letters in this script which are barely distinguishable, e.g. daledh and resh, but these can cause no significant confusion.) Hence, a waw written for a yodh (or vice versa) is a very common error.⁶⁴ This is sufficient to explain infra locli tuo; for the sofer must have simply made the slight error of giving the final yodh too long a stem. But the nagdan has read this as tuo, and pointed it accordingly, thus aggravating and consolidating the error.⁶⁵ Without understanding this process it would be difficult to

explain the essi (referring to a masculine singular antecedent) in a servire essi on r'. 9b. (B has a servire esso at this point.) Confirmation of this process is given by sopre ali mane vostri (r'. 10a) where the last vowel is written with a waw but the naqdan has noticed the error and pointed it with the chireq for i.⁶⁶ A similar story lies behind the sopro on f. 10a;⁶⁷ and this kind of substitution is frequent throughout this and the other texts. Such a form as lori in i patri lori is particularly treacherous as it looks like a metaplasm caused by analogy with i patri nostri etc. and therefore looks like a respectable dialect trait. Indeed, it is known in normal Italian dialects.⁶⁸

Naturally, it is not suggested that in all cases which could be explained in this way, there is necessarily no metaplasm involved - particularly doubtful are such forms as nomo, maro, etc. - but this would account for a great number of strange vowel forms.

A confusion of this kind coupled with an inability to deal with a "difficult" series of vowels probably accounts for the peculiar e f'oro conpliti li çeli e la terra e tuto l'ostre loro on r'. 39a. In contrast, we find in C: e tuta l'oste loro.

Sometimes incorrect pointing where the consonants are correct produces curious vowels, e.g. on f. 40b we find i siano for e siano.

The second naqdan leaves the Hebrew titles and the rubrics unpointed, and he is even more revealing than the first in his misunderstanding of the consonants. His pointing shows that he is not really familiar with the type of language intended by the sofer. On f. 102a we find la granezze (with a yodh), pointed contradictorily la granezza. On the line below

he has pointed both lo santer'ecamento and santer'ecaremo with a shewa in the first syllable, evidently because of the absence of a mater lectionis, instead of ^{supplying} a pathach.⁶⁹ Is it a Tuscanising tendency which makes him point what is clearly non se cessara on f. 102a as non se cessera? On the other hand, in the cases where there is no mater lectionis but a shewa should be supplied for e, in forms such as the deli on f. 101a, he sometimes puts in a pathach, making dali. He tends to put e in final position even in a masculine plural, although he has on f. 101a a quelli, livivi, etc., and he gets confused by the lack of matres lectionis; hence he writes guarisce ala malate for guarisce ali malati and a quelle chi for a quelli chē; and on f. 102, li morte (twice). On f. 102b we find sopre tuti lopere toi, but li criaturi and li creature, redonenza (with shewa), for redunanza, danenze dati (again on f. 107a) for denanze deti, i.e. when there is no mater lectionis he often makes the wrong choice between shewa (e) and pathach (a). But notice here we have nele paravole. He does not use rapheh at all, so there is no distinction between p and f, or between b and v. And we find many more instances of what may well be misreadings (though it is difficult to be sure), such as the la benedizoni on f. 104b, etc.

It is evident from these examples that the second naqdan filled in the vowel points according to what he took as the logic of the consonants, frequently getting it wrong, and was not conversant with the language the text was written in. Hence, it was clearly not his native dialect.

A slight indication of the state the sofer himself may have left the whole manuscript in is given by the long rubric on f. 107a, where in eleven lines of instructions, the sofer has pointed one word, siano (the

rest has remained unpointed) presumably because it could be mistaken for a word which occurs a little lower down, seno (= 'se no'). That this is not the work of the second naqdan, although it falls in his part of the manuscript, is evident, from the inclusion of the methegh in this word. This examination of the sources of the vowel structure of *l* helps to clarify the real structure of C and E.

Although many of the South-Central vowel characteristics remain, together with traces of the vowel complications resulting from the method of transmission outlined above, the vowels, in comparison with A, show signs of Tuscanisation and a greater degree of consistency, although the consonantal structure has remained Southern in character (granne, spanne etc., in fact, -nd never occurs). Hence we find constantly, lo as the definite article and cordogliare, volenta, satolla etc. and a tendency towards i rather than e in the atonic vowel, e.g. misericordia, settima; although we still find frequently the type omeni, santefeca, etc. It is noticeable that both settima and settema occur in C whereas E has more constantly settima, thus showing a greater degree of Tuscanisation and thus confirming the conclusion arrived at above, that this is a later copy by the same scribe.⁷⁰

We also find the scribe coping with forms which might lead to metaplasm or confusion as already mentioned, such as tuta loste loro. Both C and E make considerable attempts to represent gemination, which conforms to a Tuscan pattern, as was made clear in Chapter IV.⁷¹ B shows a different tendency, which is probably attributable to Marchegiano influence, i.e. the atonic vowel based on yodh tends to be e even in

final vowels or in the masculine plural, e.g. le comanamente soe, le patre nostre, etc.⁷² The consonantal text is also more affected in B, D and F. In B we find regularly più, pioja, etc. for the plu, ploja of A, C, E and D, and F. There are signs of Northern influence on the text of D and F, e.g. citede, volontede etc., inalsasti, seljesti etc., seguro, and metaphrasms of the type grano, grana (= 'grande').

Northern influence is evident in F (written at Cento) in the spelling of what is in literary Italian, as in the other texts, the ś of scemo, sciacquare etc. In the other texts the word scegliesti is spelt ʾḳṣṣṣṣ; this corresponds to a pronunciation śel'ēsti. However F has ʾḳṣṣṣṣ in which the zade and the samech point to a northern pronunciation, sel'esti or tsel'esti. Both D and F avoid the implications of the shin, found in the other texts in the group -st-, and spell words such as questo, mosto with a samech.

What is probably the influence of written Italian is seen in a feature of D, for, as we have seen, there is no reason to assume the writer could not read the Latin alphabet.⁷³ D is unique, as has been shown in chapter IV,⁷⁴ in sometimes representing a nasal before a labial by mem rather than nun, whereas we only find the second type in the other texts, i.e. tenpo, senpre, etc. This does not represent a difference in pronunciation but simply a different spelling convention.⁷⁵ However, the text shows a certain consistency, for it constantly spells certain words with nun and just as constantly spells others with mem, e.g. we find constantly tenporali (tempī) and most other cases spelt with nun, whereas sempre is spelt consistently with a mem. Here it would seem, the scribe

the scribe has copied faithfully the spelling of tengorale, etc., but a word which was seen frequently by the scribe as a common word in Italian has impressed its spelling upon him.

It is evident then that the original linguistic character of the text has been much obscured in these copies, and it is difficult to distinguish original features of the language from scribal accretions. The vowels in particular must be treated warily, e.g. granezze is probably a vestige of the feminine singular of the ^{fifth declension} ~~third conjugation~~ (-ITIES) but one cannot be sure.

There are inconclusive affinities in many features with Umbrian and Roman texts, particularly the latter. However, there are some outstanding differences from old Roman texts, e.g. the siddurim show a complete absence of diphthongisation of o and e (the types bono, pede, etc. are constant), an absence of the types tio, sio, sea, siei etc., and the third person plural verbal termination in -co (Roman texts: saco, staco, vocono, etc.).⁷⁶ On the other hand, still within the same area, there seem to me slight, but more significant affinities with Abruzzese of an Aquilan type.

A striking feature of our texts is the conservation of PL- CL-, BL-, FL-, e.g. ploja, plu, clama, clinare, ocli, blanco, flore, etc., a feature occurring in Abruzzese dialects which has been variously accounted for.⁷⁷

An element of pronunciation for the record of which we are indebted, for once, to the greater accuracy (in this case) of the Hebrew alphabet in comparison with the Latin alphabet is ś + consonant; for our texts are able to distinguish between ś and s by the use of shin

and samech. In texts A, B, C and E we find that before t, a shin is always used and never a samech, whereas before any other consonant a samech is always used and never a shin. Hence we find quešto, nošto, amašti, etc., but skudia, eskonparavo, spani, spada, etc. The sound ś before a consonant occurs in the dialects of various parts of Italy from north to south. However the pattern varies considerably as to which consonants are preceded by ś and which by s. Rohlfs examines their distribution throughout those somewhat limited areas of the peninsula where ś + consonants is found; and of the large number of areas covered (approximately sixteen), only two show the same distribution of ś and s as our texts, i.e. a few parts of S. Apulia, and the Abruzzi: "in den Abbruzzen findet man in vielen Zonen śt neben erhaltenem sk und sp."⁷⁸ A feature of the systems of transcription which at first sight does not seem to have any purpose is the use of rapheh and daghesh with daleth. A typical instance is the pointing of adurnato e urdenato (A, f. 11a) where the first daleth has rapheh and the second, daghesh. However, these signs are used purposefully on most of the appropriate letters and significantly appear much less often on ghimel, where their value could be of little significance. Most apparent aberrations are caused by the simple omission of the appropriate sign. Thus one is led to believe that the insistence with which daleth is provided with diacritical signs means that the letter have some specific phonetic function, and are not merely due to ingrained Hebrew orthographic habits. The pattern of incidence of ṭ makes it evident that this does not represent gemination, even of a syntactical type. But ṭ is generally intervocalic. Thus everything points to

the latter form representing a type of articulation approaching δ (as in Spanish), whereas the form with daghesh must represent the normal Italian d and occurs in an initial or postconsonantal position. Such a situation, with a d approaching a t (as it might be described by an Italian) is found in the Abruzzi. The explanatory note on the Aquila text in Battisti's Testi dialettali makes the following important observations:

Quanto al d.t, lo stesso autore⁷⁹ s'esprime: "ha un suono che non è d ma non è neppur t, sarebbe il d del greco moderno" (p. 31, n. 4) e altrove: "il d schietto non si può sentire che dopo consonante o nell'aggeminazione. Del resto o iniziale, o mediano, se non scompare, passa al suono del d greco moderno, suono che sta tra d e t...." Il continuo insistere del Rossi-Casè sul suono intermedio tra t e d⁸⁰... fa pensare a una pronunzia sorda della media originaria.

A lexical item, appressemare (< APPROXIMARE + PRESSUS) which occurs frequently in the texts is characteristically Abruzzese.⁸¹ An apocopated form of the type birbò, consolaziò, which occurs in the dialects of Loreto, Ancona, Osimo and Aquila⁸² is represented in the Siddurim by the word jeneraçio (or jenoreçio) which occurs quite frequently.

However, modern conditions cannot be taken further as a guide. These have their limitations, as can be seen if we try to localise a form such as enzemore which occurs with the kind of variation outlined in the previous pages (e.g. insemore) in all the manuscripts. It can be seen from the AIS⁸³ that this type is now limited to the Gargano while the rest of the Italian peninsula presents different forms of the derivatives of IN SIMUL / IN SEMEL, namely the types insieme, assieme, nsembre nsemble.⁸⁴ The Abruzzi, in fact, presents mainly the type nzembre with only slight variations in the vowels. This therefore would not seem

consonant with the apparent Abruzzese elements in our texts. However, we do find the type which occurs in the Siddurim in ancient Abruzzese texts, e.g. insemmora in the Historia Aquilana of Antonio di Puccio (stanzas 346, 418)³⁵ and insemera (p. 13) insemmora (p. 4) in the Cronaca Aquilana of Buccio di Ranallo.⁸⁶ It is evident that a development insemera ➤ insem'ra > insembra has taken place in the Abruzzi since the Middle Ages. Indeed the language of the Siddurim has many affinities with that of ancient Abruzzese texts, particularly Antonio di Buccio's Historia which is the most dialectal, although not the oldest of the texts.⁸⁷ Even so, this text has clearly been more influenced by Latin and literary Tuscan than our texts could have been.⁸⁸ The following types coincide with characteristics found in the Siddurim:

In Antonio di Buccio⁸⁹ we find plangere (st. 14), plu (passim), doppla (853), blanco (730) etc., poczo, pocza (passim) etc., pagura (42), finavamo (54), sopre (passim), insemera (346, 418), le corpora (391), tenporale (955, 'tempo'), intenco (452), bannire (566), granne (passim, but also frequently grande), aina (465), fornitu lu anno (534). (Note also the constant spellings of senpre, tenporale, etc.) Typical oscillations of the kind ajuto, agiuto, munno, mondo, occur throughout the text, however.⁹⁰

In the Cantari di Breccio,⁹¹ besides numerous parallels, of particular note is the use of scuritate in the sense of 'a grave affliction' (p. 58).

The development -GN- ➤ -nn- which appears in the Siddurim (seno 'segno', renare 'regnerà') also has parallels in Abruzzese texts: rennu, (Lamentio, stanzas 29, 30),⁹² sinno, desinno, se senò, (Buccio,⁹³ pp. 175, 50, 35).

Further similarities may be found in abundance in mediaeval

Abruzzese dramatic texts,⁹⁴ but three features of note are s > z after a nasal or liquid, senzo (p. 81, 'senso'), planze (82, 'pianse'), menzza (161, 'mense'), volze (251, 'volse' = 'volle'); appressema (167, 262); benneczzone (93), a popular form akin to the benedizone of the Siddurim, as opposed to the learned form with i (in both the Abruzzese texts and the Siddurim, however, we find -zione in all other words of this type).

We cannot necessarily conclude from the foregoing that the text was composed originally in the Abruzzi, for, given the mutability of the vowel structure, it may well have been composed further south, but we should rather consider the texts as showing signs of an Abruzzese phase in the manuscript tradition. Favourable conditions for the Jews in the Abruzzi in the early 15th century under Joanna II⁹⁵ and under the Aragonese⁹⁶, particularly in Aquila, Sulmona, and Lanciano probably fostered considerable literary and scribal activity which left its imprint on our texts. The demographic results of the conversionist preaching of men like Giovanni da Capistrano, Jacopo da Montepreandone and Bernardino da Feltre in the second half of the century, with the consequence that in 1496 there were hardly any Jews left in Aquila,⁹⁷ perhaps helps to explain the apparent shifting of copying activity as outlined above, northwards from the Abruzzi towards the Marche, Emilia and Tuscany.

What degree of specifically Jewish elements are there in the language? It must be borne in mind that nowhere have the distinguishing characteristics of the frequently mentioned "Judaeo-Italian dialect" been defined.

There is no reason to assume that the Romance words which are

unattested elsewhere such as balistratichi ('doorposts')⁹⁸ are necessarily Jewish dialect. These could well be from southern dialect which does not happen to be recorded in any text. Certainly large areas of the south have no linguistic documentation for the period before the thirteenth century. Note that ⁱⁿ Vidossi's account of the dialect structure of Italy before Dante's time no Abruzzese texts are mentioned.⁹⁹ A number of Hebrew words occur in the texts. However these are written according to Hebrew spelling rather than the system of transcription used for the Italian part of the text, as has been shown above. This makes it clear that the scribe was fully aware of the alien nature of these words, and shows that they can not be considered an assimilated part of a spoken dialect. These are almost exclusively terms connected with Jewish liturgy or belief, for which it would be hard or distasteful to find an equivalent in Italian. Feste would surely imply the Holy Days of the Christian calendar, not those of the Jewish, hence mo'adim is used constantly in the rubrics. Berachà ('benediction') is particularly illuminating for we find benedizone frequently in the body of the prayers when referring to God's blessing on man, etc., but in the rubrics a liturgical benediction is always referred to as a berachà, for a benedizone is the Catholic prayer. Similar factors may be seen to underlie the other Hebrew terms used (the chazan, although not a priest, actually performs the service and has no equivalent in the Catholic church or in Italian). Similar factors apply to the peculiar word Domedeth.¹⁰⁰

These words, then, must be regarded as technical terms inevitable in any distinct professional or social group and cannot be considered to constitute a kind of Italian Yiddish.

The elements outlined above have produced a literary phenomenon whose features are not immediately dependent on a spoken language.

If the foregoing is a correct analysis, one would expect the language of the scribe himself to be different from that of his text. It is of course difficult to find much evidence of what the scribe's own tongue or vehicle for literary expression may have been, as the texts are our only evidence.

However, there are some slight signs in the texts themselves which forcibly suggest that the scribe, for the most part, was copying a language which was different from his own.

In **A**, the incomprehension on the part of the second naqdan especially, of the consonantal text, shows that he was not dealing with a text in his native dialect, otherwise he would not have had such difficulty in pointing it. Here we have a single consonantal text pointed by two different naqdanim and nothing could better illustrate the absence of a common dialect among the Jews of Italy than a comparison of the same passage pointed by each of the two naqdanim; for here we see that, within the narrow limits imposed by the consonantal text, they tend not to restore a common linguistic colouring to it but, on the contrary, to pull in quite different directions. Such a passage occurs on f. 103b. (pointed by the second naqdan) and f. 145a (pointed by the first naqdan).¹⁰¹

f. 103b: Tu ašeljēsti noi datuti li popole amašte

f. 145a: Tu šeljesti noi detuti li popoli amasti

anoi e bolentaš (e)te inoi inalgašte noi de

noi e vulentasti enoi inalgašti noi de

tuti li lengui. Santer'ekašti noi neli comanamente
 tuti li lenguai. Santerekasti noi neli cumanamanti
 toi e apresemašte noi re ~~no~~stro, etc.
 toi e apresemastì noi re ~~no~~stro, etc.

The colophon of F¹⁰² is in Italian (in Hebrew characters) and it is the only part of the MS. which must be considered to be entirely the scribe's own creation. He must have modelled his mode of writing, however, on the language and spelling of the text itself; for where else would he find an example of how to express himself in Italian in Hebrew characters? Nevertheless the colophon has linguistic features which do not appear in the text itself. In this text, written in northern Italy (at Cento near Ferrara), the definite article is, without exception, the southern type lu, as in all the other texts, (also lo); but in the colophon, we find the northern form el. In all the texts we also find constantly the form sopre, whereas in this colophon we find sopra. It is clear from this that the scribe was copying a respected literary text which was not couched in his own type of language.

The texts presented by the printed editions are very similar to the manuscript versions already examined. With these the problem becomes more acute: J was printed in 1561, and in the second half of the sixteenth century we would not expect such dialectal language in a printed work - unless indeed it were written in the dialect of the Jews of the time. If J were an original translation made directly from the Hebrew, in the literary or spoken language of the translator himself, we would have to conclude that this peculiar language was Judaeo-Italian

which was widely used by the Jews in the sixteenth century. However, the only real source of this translation is clearly text H (1538), as indeed the printer explains in his foreword. This foreword itself is an indication of the degree of dependence of J on H. For although it has all the appearances of an original declaration, explaining that this is a modified version of a text already published, it is surprising on turning to H to find that this preface is closely modelled on the preface of H itself. Thus H too declares its dependence on other texts. The previous version to this was G, published in 1505, a time when the linguistic climate was very different from that of 1561.¹⁰³ G is clearly derived from the type of MS. we have been examining. It is difficult to assess exactly what the linguistic standards of a printer like Soncino may have been;¹⁰⁴ certainly we cannot expect stylistic preoccupations and artistic sensibility in a modest printer like Soncino, who was eager to produce a saleable work, one moreover which held a place of very secondary importance in his output of Hebrew, Latin and Italian works.¹⁰⁵ Linguistic discussion had hardly got under way, even in intellectual circles, and an authoritative standard, Bembo's Prose della volgar lingua which eventually affected even the less polished writers was not to be published for another twenty years. Thus no real standards had as yet emerged.¹⁰⁶ The publisher can only have been concerned that the work should serve its purpose. It contained Hebrew terms; but these were of a kind familiar to any Jew in Italy. Moreover, a polished Tuscan would hardly have served the purpose in any case, for the number of Jews in Tuscany was small compared with those in the Papal States and the North for whom this edition was probably destined (and the South till a little later.)

Hence a dialectal text of this kind, even though not in the local dialect of the reader would be as serviceable as a Tuscan text, there being many phonetic features common to dialects of the North and South which are not common to literary Florentine. Indeed some writers complained that Tuscan was too difficult.^{106a}

Moreover, it is mistaken to expect that a compiler or publisher of a liturgical work was aiming at linguistic clarity or directness and therefore was aiming at the type of language used by the potential readers. The effectiveness of a liturgical work frequently derives in part from the unfamiliarity of its style and language, as has recently been demonstrated, for instance, ⁱⁿ the case of the Book of Common Prayer.¹⁰⁷ Many passages from the Siddur translation must have been eloquent to its readers despite, or perhaps because of, its archaic language.

The source of these printed versions, then, is in every case an existing text, and their language, by the sixteenth century, must have been even more remote from current language than were the MS versions. To find supporting evidence for this we must turn to the only part of the text which can be original, i.e. the preface to H, already mentioned. Here we find some rather surprising features. Inevitably, even the publisher, who of course uses Hebrew characters to write this preface, has taken as his model the text he had been preparing for the press. This inevitably obscures, to some extent, the characteristics of the kind of Italian which he would otherwise be inclined to write if he were using the Latin alphabet. Indeed when he waxes eloquent, he tends to slip into the jargon of his text. But when he is merely explaining his purpose, his language is rather different.

This difference is pinpointed by a word which never appears in the body of the text nor in any of the other Siddurim we have been examining, i.e. the word Dio. Hence, when he is simply expressing pious hopes in a conventional manner to round off his prefatory remarks, he uses a cliché culled from the text itself: "... e sia la dolcitudine de Domedeth, Deth nostro, sopra noi. Amen." Similarly, as a kind of headline, above the head-piece (which contains in large letters the first word of the preface, 'Essendo'), he puts the following motto: "L'aiuto nostro da con Domedeth, fattore di cieli e terra". But at the very beginning of his preface, when he is explaining his motive for publishing this work, he expresses himself in a very different kind of language: "Essendo costretto¹⁰⁸ e pregato da molte gentili donne e dabbene quali desidirano de dire la lor Tefillah latino, deliberai, con l'aiuto di Dio, traslatare in latino un Siddur de tutto l'anno, ordenato con el conto de le carte [an index] e ben corretto..." In J, the first part of the preface is almost identical to that of G (except for "Tefillah vulgar" instead of "Tefillah latino"), but at the end the editor, apart from acknowledging his debt to G, has perceived the latter's uncomfortable switch of style and has not followed suit. His version ends: "... ordenato con il conto de le carte e ben corretto, sicondo li [ho] trovati stampati, e Dio sia con noi sempre. Amen." The text which follows^{this}, however, is in the usual kind of language. we have found in the MSS.¹⁰⁹

It is evident that both text and preface were intended for the same readers. If the text is in such distinctive language because this was the language of the potential readers (and of the Jewish publisher

himself'), i.e. Judaeo-Italian dialect, why was the preface not written in this language too?

The reason is that the preface is new but the text is merely an adaptation of a translation which goes back at least to the previous century and probably had a long MS. tradition even before that.

We may draw certain conclusions from this examination of the Siddur texts.

These texts are not original translations, but copies; hence their close linguistic affinities. The language of the original was probably a kind of "translationese", a literary compilation which did not correspond to a spoken dialect. Indeed, the unusual syntax which, as Cassuto pointed out, is the result of a literal mode of translation from the Hebrew, emphasises the fact that what is written in the texts does not correspond to a spoken dialect. To suggest that the language of the texts is a dialect except for the syntax is really a contradiction in terms. If the syntax is not that of a dialect then the language cannot in any real sense be said to be a dialect. But more than this it is an indication that we must look rather for literary factors in the language than for a direct derivation from spoken dialect.

The texts show considerable signs of the effects of copying, modifications and aberrations having crept into the copies particularly because the text was written in Hebrew characters which lend themselves to misreading and ambiguity when conveying Italian language and because the original was probably only a consonantal text which immediately gave rise to various possibilities as far as pointing was concerned with consequent effects on the vowel structure.

The ISS. texts can give us little indication of what the spoken language of the writer or the reader was; but in several cases there are clear indications that the language of the text is not that of the scribe. Furthermore, there are some indications of the influence of local dialect in copying, which leads us to suppose that the Jews did indeed speak local dialect in their individual geographical situations. A considerable degree of dependence on a local Italian dialect in the original composition of the translation may be supposed, but this has been considerably overlaid in the existing copies. Yet copies made in the North and Tuscany still retain strong Central-Southern characteristics with signs of a concentrated spate of copying in the Abruzzi.

That some Hebrew words were used in the text was almost inevitable considering the basically bilingual culture of the Jews of Italy.

Other texts

The excellence of Cassuto's edition has been pointed out above¹¹⁰ and only a few minor emendations might be suggested.¹¹¹ What seems ill founded is his classification of its language as Judaeo-Italian dialect, a koine which he sees as the source of the 'modern' Judaeo-Italian dialects.

But Cassuto's own remarks about the language are not really consistent. For instance he says:

"Quanto al lessico, sembra che di proposito l'autore, volendo scrivere in volgare, abbia evitato di adoperare vocaboli schiettamente ebraici (all'infuori di nomi propri come Sion, Israel, del resto presso a poco eguali anche in italiano), sebbene tali vocaboli non dovessero certo mancare nel dialetto da lui parlato."¹¹² But how can we know what the

dialect contained apart from the evidence of the Elegia itself? What reason could the author have had, one wonders, for suppressing expressions usual in the "dialetto da lui parlato" if the poem was intended solely for a Jewish Italian audience (as is evident from its inclusion in the Machzor) and was written in "dialetto giudeo-italiano"? Moreover Cassuto elsewhere (p. 366) says the author intentionally "scrisse nel dialetto parlato dal popolo." Indeed it would be surprising to find no Hebrew words in a poem of 120 lines if these words formed an integral part of the Judaeo-Italian koine and if the Elegia were in fact written in that koine.

The other part of Cassuto's classification of the text's language seems much more sound. He considers it to belong to the "sezione marchigiano-umbro-romanesca" (p. 331) and shows convincingly that there are close affinities between the language of the Elegy and that of early Italian texts produced in this area, such as the Ritmo di B. Alessio and the Pianto delle Marie¹¹³ (pp. 365-71), even to the extent of very similar phraseology. Moreover, he attributes such importance to these affinities that they constitute the basis for his dating of the Elegia. (p. 384).

Cassuto himself states: "Gli elementi specificamente giudaici nel dialetto dell'elegia sono scarsi". But then he goes on to seek a specifically Jewish use of a handful of terms such as scola, taupina, patto. Scola for 'synagogue' was frequently used in Italy even by Gentiles, and we find it in a document of the seventeenth century.¹¹⁴ But in the text we find also templo, the modern name, and could scola in its context not mean 'school'?¹¹⁵ Even in the sense 'synagogue', is this not a technical word? Taupina is very common in old Italian texts, es-

pecially in this area.¹¹⁶

Of petto Cassuto says: "È la traduzione tradizionale dell'ebraico berith", and he indicates the Makrè Dardekè s.v. as another instance.

One might add that it is also used in this way in the Siddurim. However, this would indicate literary affinities rather than common dialect; but even this is perhaps going too far, since Diodati and Luzzi, for instance, translate the berethi of Gen. 17. 4 as "il mio petto" and "il petto che fo con te".¹¹⁷

Both Elondheim and Spitzer attempt to emphasise the Jewish element in the language. Elondheim, in assessing Cassuto's edition, laments the fact that a facsimile of the Parma manuscript (F) was not published together with the text, for he suspects that more markedly Jewish features of the language have been masked by Cassuto's transcription into Latin characters.¹¹⁸ In fact an examination of the latter reveals the extreme conscientiousness and accuracy of Cassuto's edition.¹¹⁹

Spitzer, it seems to me, exaggerates the "Judaean-Italian koine" interpretation by taking the affinities in language between the Italian texts and the Elegia to be "borrowing". Teupino, he says, is "un imprestito dalla poesia religiosa cristiana." In fact he writes as though Hebrew were the native language of the writer and reader of the Elegia.¹²⁰

Comparison with the ^{Siddurim}~~Elegia~~ reveals a closer affinity orthographically than linguistically, which is the opposite to what one would expect if they were both in the same dialect. If both were couched in Judaeo-Italian dialect we would not be surprised to find them adapting Hebrew orthographic habits in quite different ways to represent the same

sounds (especially if the Siddurim were based solely on oral tradition), just as the scribes of early Italian texts, on the basis of the Latin alphabet, were all striving, for instance, to represent l' in the following: orgoil (-il-), molie (-li-), fillu (-ll-), aghullia (-lli-), molge (-lg-), molgie (-lgi-), pilha (-lh-), pilhya (-lhy-), nalgla (-lgl-), talgliente (-lgli-), moglie (-gli-), mogle (-gl-).^{120a} We would expect to find this kind of orthographic divergence between the Siddurim and the Elegia, but we would, at the same time, expect the language so represented to be the same Judaeo-Italian dialect.

Despite the differences, there are some striking points of similarity between C (Siddur), for instance, and O (Elegia), in their systems of transcription, notably 5, 7, 13, 23, 34, 43 and 69.¹²¹ It might be considered that most of these common features derive from the pointing which, as we have made clear above, was probably a later addition in both cases. But even so, 43 and 69 in particular, involve the consonantal system. Therefore, even at a very cautious estimate, there is no possibility of the two writing systems being completely independent (as there is, say, between C and L¹²²).

Considering this affinity of writing habits, it is not surprising to find similar general indications of a central Italian origin in the language of both texts, such as ND > nn, NS > nz, conservation of PL -, FL -. But the differences in language are considerable, e.g. although ND > nn occurs occasionally in the Elegia (in five words only), i.e. in granni, fonnaemento, vinnéro, bennarelli, conservation of ND is by far the more usual result: condutta, plorando, remembrando, gattivandu, (granti),

mandno, grandi, bando, bandire (doubtful reading), venduti, venduta, respundi, grendi, grandi, grandi, prindisse, grande. In contrast, ND is quite foreign to the Siddurim, where the type recomen[n]o, span[n]i, gran[n]e are absolutely constant. In the Elegia, the 3rd person singular of the past absolute is regularly foi, but in the Siddur fo; we find quisto, quista, quillo, quilla in the Elegia, but questo, questa, etc. in the Siddur; dvio, Deo in the Elegia, but Deth, Domedeth in the Siddur, etc. In the syntax too there are significant differences. In the Elegia, the possessive adjective regularly precedes the noun: li soi grandezi, li nostri patri, lo soi nome, li loro figli, dde mia lie, dde mia iente, nostro Signore, lo too forore, lo too nomo, lo nostro coro, lo too ruroi, de la toa mano, lo too prufeta, lo santo toi nome, whereas in the Siddurim it always follows the noun: lo rencordo tuo, lo templo santo tuo, lo nome suo, etc.¹²³ In the Elegia we find si no poi recitare, 'non si può recitare', as against the usual word order in negation in the Siddurim, non li manca, etc. Further differences are: ked è in the Elegia, but never in the Siddurim, where ke è is frequent; dece, dere in the Elegia, but always dice, dire in the Siddurim; cu in the Elegia, con in the Siddurim; plo in the Elegia (but see below), plu in the Siddurim.

The language of O and C could not even be considered as two chronologically separate phases of the Judaeo-Italian dialect, for there are features in the later text (C) which would have to be considered the more archaic (e.g. the regular ND > nn, Domedeth, Deth, etc.)

Thus we may draw the following conclusions. The relationship between C and O is not simply that they are both in Judaeo-Italian dialect.

They both probably originate from the same ambience (as can be seen from the closeness in their writing conventions) and therefore also show regional elements in their language which point to the same area of Italy, probably the Aquila - Rome area. Just how close linguistically the originals were (for there is little doubt that what we have in both cases are late copies), it is impossible to judge. But however close the originals may have been, the present linguistic divergences stem principally from the quite separate manuscript traditions to which they belong - each having been copied by different scribes in different places and subject to different influences. This seems to me a more realistic interpretation than that which starts from a supposed common Jewish dialect for which the texts could be the only evidence. Hence, there is no reason to consider the Elegia to be in Judaeo-Italian dialect.

Furthermore, Cassuto, having shown that there are evident copying errors in O, rightly concludes (p. 351): "Da tutto ciò sembra risultare che l'amanuense del nostro codice, se pure non già quello del codice da cui il nostro deriva, non comprendeva più bene il suo testo." But this is very difficult to believe if one insists that the text is written in Judaeo-Italian dialect, the common koine of the Jews of Italy, the "dialetto parlato dal popolo". This in fact pinpoints an important principle in Judaeo-Italian texts; this is, that because of the dichotomy between vowels and consonants, only someone perfectly familiar with the language intended by the author of a consonantal text (i.e. a close contemporary from the same cultural centre) can point it correctly because of the inherent ambivalence of the Hebrew consonantal text and the absence of any fixed canons

for pointing.

The likelihood of misinterpreting the consonants is aggravated by the fact that the pointing was added probably just because, or at a time when, the language of the original was becoming unfamiliar. (This is, of course, the presumed basis of the masoretic system^{of} pointing itself, in normal Hebrew.¹²⁴)

Hence it is clear ~~this~~ was no standard dialect, no Judaeo-Italian koine common to the Jews in Italy, otherwise the scribe would have had no difficulty in pointing the text.

A further point may be made to show how emphasis on "dialect" tends to obscure the real nature of the text in the case of the Elegie as in that of the Siddur. Line 96, in Cassuto's text, reads "plo dori ke flambi ardenti"; and one wonders how FLŪ(S) DŪRI > plo dori has taken place. Cassuto, in his analysis (p. 377), after showing that, "Ū di solito permane," of which there are many instances in the text, simply says, "talvolta passa a o", and gives the only three examples in the text: roppe, plo and dori. Contini, who sometimes corrects Cassuto's text with keen insight, prints plo dori with no comment.¹²⁵ However, this is a purely graphic aberration, on the lines of the oscillations between u and o we have seen in the Siddurim. What the author originally wrote was םןןן םןןן, i.e. plu duri, as is attested by F. But the scribe of O (or his exemplar), in pointing these words, has been influenced by a general tendency to "correct" or "modernise" the text in the direction u > o, (which probably accounts for the form of the definite article, pointed lu on line 17, but lo in every other case). Hence, this is undoubtedly a hyper-correction

and the text should be emended to plu duri (the reading of P, ignoring the less correct text, F) for this is manifestly an error on the part of F. In this way, what might be considered to be a peculiar element of the "Judaean-Italian koiné" is actually one of the results of the way the text was copied.¹²⁶

J.B. Sermoneta's article on the four extracts of the Divine Comedy, as has already been mentioned,¹²⁷ ~~are~~ ^{is} of particular interest here because of his linguistic evaluation of the extracts, which he considers to be translated into the koiné.¹²⁸ These extracts were previously published by C. Bernheimer, in 1915, but discussed in less detail.¹²⁹

However, Sermoneta's conclusions, as will be shown below, are based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the text, mainly because insufficient attention has been paid, as in previous examinations of Judaean-Italian texts, to purely textual factors.

Sermoneta points out that the extracts quoted by Rabbi Yehudah do not correspond to any accepted Dante text, as can be seen from his transcription into Latin characters of all four extracts. He considers that this can be accounted for by supposing that Rabbi Yehuda "traducesse i versi della Commedia in dialetto giudeo-italiano, sì da renderli orecchievoli al pubblico che leggeva i suoi lavori."¹³⁰ And of these readers, he says: "Pubblico, che, come è noto, parlava un proprio dialetto." He bases this on Cassuto who has shown the dialect to be a "Vera e propria koiné;" and he concludes: "la presente trascrizione conferma in pieno le conclusioni premesse dallo stesso Cassuto alla sua edizione critica di Una Antichissima Elegia...."

Furthermore, Sermoneta suggests that the "per lo cerco" in Far.XX

50 for Dante's "per l'arco" may be due to Rabbi Yehuda's quoting from memory. But on finding specifically Tuscan characteristics in the language, he wonders whether Rabbi Yehuda was not copying from a Tuscan manuscript: "Potremmo forse azzardare l'ipotesi che il nostro trascrittore avesse sotto gli occhi un codice 'toscaneggiante'? Oppure che citasse a memoria da una tradizione testuale toscana..." He aptly points out that "Gli esempi suaccennati rendono dubbia ogni conclusione..." although, despite the conflicting evidence provided by these factors, he is in no doubt that the text is in "Judaeo-Italian koine."

This inconclusiveness derives principally from Sermoneta's considering that the text represents exactly what Rabbi Yehuda wrote, e.g. "Rabbi Jehudah, avendo corredato, come vedemmo, la sua trascrizione di segni vocalici", etc. However, Sermoneta does not state that this MS. Hebr. 616 of the Hebrew University is the autograph, and indeed, as he points out, five other copies are known.¹³¹ In fact, a close examination of the Hebrew text provided by Sermoneta shows that this must be a copy, and a rather poor one at that. For the scribe has made a number of mistakes which could not be ascribed to the author. It might be argued that what are here called errors are actually dialect traits and unusual methods of transcription. However, one indisputable error is sufficient to cast suspicion on the many other doubtful points in the text. Sermoneta does not comment on any of these minor points of textual interpretation and seemingly ignores them in his transcription. However, on the error mentioned above, he says, "Non so spiegarvi la lezione nunzio."¹³² Indeed, it would be hard to explain how Yehuda Romano could have written "morte

nunziò per vera penitenza" for "morte indugiò per vera penitenza" (Par. XX.51) which gives an almost opposite meaning, if he understood, as Sermoneta has skilfully demonstrated he did, the full significance of the Dante text. Clearly this is not what he originally wrote, but the work of a copyist.

Assuming Rabbi Yehudah intended something equivalent to morte 'indugiò in Hebrew characters, the second word might well be written נח'סן . This could easily have been misread as נח'סן , i.e. nunziò, especially in the absence of vowel points, which, to judge from their inaccuracy in this MS, are probably a later addition.¹³³ The crucial point is that the nunziò of the Jerusalem MS. quite clearly derives from an original indugiò through one, or, possibly, a series of copyists' errors. From this it is clear that the manuscript is corrupt; and this becomes increasingly apparent the more one examines the details of the text, especially the pointing. For instance, the spelling יג'ט for dato (Purg. XVI. 75) is inexplicable unless one assumes the consonants are correct but the pointing is erroneous. And what are we to make of נח'סן for la soa (Par. V. 83) except that the vowels are chaotic, whereas the consonants are unexceptionable? Without the pointing it would read quite clearly la soa or la sua. In fact, in the first passage quoted by Sermoneta (Par. XX. 49-54), containing thirty-nine words in the Dante text, there are at least eight scribal errors.¹³⁴

Hence, Sermoneta's transcription frequently does not correspond to what the scribe has written and although there is much sound material in his account of the system of transcription, it is not consistent, even

apart from his having overlooked the errors in the text.¹³⁵ What is of more importance, though, is the section "Caratteristiche dialettali". There can be little doubt, even taking into account the errors in the text, about certain of the characteristics which he points out, e.g. nn and mm from nd and mb (amanno "amando", commatte "combette", etc.), and the forms de and ve (- di, vi). However, in certain features, as in his transcription of the text, he would seem to have been unduly influenced by Cassuto's account of the Elesia, i.e. he finds features which are not justified by the Hebrew text. For instance Sermoneta gives "Pronome dimostrativo: quisto, quilla." But it is difficult to see how this is derived from this text and not simply from a preoccupation with the koine. These words only occur 3 times in the excerpts; the first in Par.XX.49 is written equel (transcribed by the editor as "E quil"); the second in Par.XIII.53, written quela (but transcribed "quilla"), the third in Par.V.73, where the MS. is indicated as defective, and where there are no vowel points - hence the word could be equally quis... or ques...

Even so, the genuine dialect characteristics which are present in the text (and not due simply to Sermoneta's transcription) and which he gives as evidence of the koine, are found in Roman texts of the fourteenth century such as the Vita di Cola di Rienzo.¹³⁶ For instance, "Preposizioni e particelle pronominali: de, ve" are regular in the Vita: regove, ve trova, de Roma; "conservazione della j iniziale: Jodeo, jodizio" (although these could equally well be read Gio, gio-) is regular in the Vita: iudicava, Iubileo, iente; "I nessi 'nd', 'mb', 'mn' danno sempre: 'nn' e 'mm', and he gives as examples amanno, commatte, oani or onne. In the Vita we find secunna, palonna, lennrigo, etc.

But there are features of the language, even in Sermoneta's transcription, which do not accord with the language of the Allegia. For instance, the masculine singular definite article is el (twice), il, lo, l', 'l (once each), whereas el or il never occur in the Allegia. These Sermoneta attempts to explain as a more modern phase of the koine.

Without going into further detail, it is now sufficiently clear what these Dante extracts represent. They are a copy possibly of a markedly Tuscan original made by Roman Jewish scribes who have not understood the Dante text (witness also wrong division of words: segu(e)n(e) elacerconferenza, with omission of a yodh before n in the first word, for segue in la circonferenza probably confused with segue ne la). This is especially understandable if the original was purely consonantal, for scribes evidently accustomed to copying normal Hebrew have attempted to point these Italian extracts without understanding them properly or the vowels implicit in the consonants. At the same time the scribes have been affected by their own Roman dialect and have tended to Romanise the text. The Roman element in the language may be in part (i.e. in the consonants especially) due to Yehuda Romano himself. But this is doubtful if the glossary of philosophical and grammatical terms contained in British Museum MS. Add. 27179 is indeed his.¹³⁷ For here we find terms like mondo spirituale and monuo circolario etc., without assimilation of the d.

However, dictation may account for the first radical change in the phonology of Dante's text, if Rabbi Yehuda was dictating to a Roman amanuensis. For, it must be borne in mind that there is no sense in which the Dante text could really be copied. It would have to be

read (aloud?) and the sounds then recorded in Hebrew characters, e.g. Yehuda might read quando, di che and his amanuensis write them as quanno de che; or he himself, although writing mondo, etc. might well pronounce Dante's quando, di che in Roman fashion. However, this is pure conjecture. What is certain is that the M.S. in the Hebrew University contains extracts of a bad copy which has been made by uncomprehending Roman Jewish scribes. Sermoneta has transcribed these extracts inaccurately without remarking on the errors in which they abound.¹³⁸ From this he has deduced a system of transcription which does not altogether accord with the practice evident in the extracts, and from this, in turn, he has deduced characteristics which accord with "Judæo-Italian koine", i.e. the language of the Elegia. But there are differences between the language of the Dante extracts and the Elegia; and, what is more pertinent, the linguistic characteristics of the extracts may feasibly be interpreted as the result of copying, by scribes accustomed to writing Hebrew but speaking the vernacular of fourteenth century Rome, of an originally Tuscan text. These extracts, then, do not constitute evidence for the existence of a Judæo-Italian koine.

Other texts such as L, R, N, the Hymne Sabbatique, the Elegia sui martiri d'Ancona, 1556-7, the translation of the Moreh Nebuchim¹³⁹ show no evidence of a common Judæo-Italian dialect, each having a linguistic character of its own. For the most part, they are in a poor kind of literary Italian, which befits their generally low level of literary attainment. Certainly, none of them has the originality and eloquence of the Elegia. The Hymne is characteristic of these texts and a brief comment on it is called for here as it has been classed by Roth as "en judéo-

italien". The most charitable way to describe this poem is as a dreary piece of doggerel which goes on for no less than two hundred and thirty strophes of five lines each, of which the following is an example of the language and style (stanza 20):

Deh! mia volontà fia grata
A questa dama sì onorata:
In questa sì bella giornata.
Venga ella alla mia posa
Ora vien o bella sposa.

The most remarkable feature of the language is the large number of adjectives in-osa. But this is the direct consequence of the author's choice of metre. For although the rhyme of the first three lines is different in each stanza, it is then followed by a rhyming couplet, always ending in sposa, (the Sabbath, personified as a bride as in other Jewish hymns).

This means that the author has to find 230 words in -osa. After running the gamut of cosa, valorosa, luminosa, nascosa, pietosa, sanguinosa, etc., he resorts to balbucciosa (-z-?), sublimosa, unilosa, desertosa, malignosa (although he has maligno out of rhyme), sterilosa, and he even descends to the ludicrous line "che la terra era inondosa" (Noah's Ark).¹⁴⁰ The few dialect words in the text are traceable to the Modena-Ferrara area, e.g. ingrastara (st. 198) which Bertoni registers as Modenese dialect.¹⁴¹

Hence there is no reason to consider the language of this text to be Judaeo-Italian dialect. It is an Italian text written in Hebrew characters, couched in the kind of language which a Christian contemporary, of similar literary ability, may well have used.

Notes to Chapter V

1. See p. 32, above.
2. See p. 23 above.
3. See pp. 25-26, above.
4. i.e. in J.B. Sermoneta's article of 1964, discussed below pp. 203-8; see also pp. 29-30, above.
5. See previous note.
6. For a discussion of the difference between the Siddur and the Machzor, with particular reference to the Italian rite, see Bernheimer, Paleo-grafìa ebraica, cit., pp. 300 - 301.
7. The first modern translation of the Siddur into Italian seems to be that of S. Romanelli, Repubblica Italiana, 1802. From then on many other translations were to appear during the course of the nineteenth century. Isolated prayers, particularly those for special occasions appear, however, as early as the 18th century. None of these works has anything in common with the earlier liturgical translations. The language is usually ornate literary Italian, e.g. a volume of prayers in Hebrew and Italian, published at Mantua in 1767, entitled, Nell'occasione di essere stata attaccata dal vajuolo e.... restituita in salute... l'augustissima Maria Teresa, d'Austria imperatrice... orazioni e divotissime azioni di grazie rese a Dio Signore dall'umilissima suddita università degli Ebrei di Mantova, begins: "Deh! Signore, risana di grazia l'Eccelsa Maestà dell'Imperatrice Regina, a pro della quale noi supplichiamo: abbi di essa Compassione, e fa sorgere medicamenti proficui a qualunque suo male ed infermità: illumina le menti de' Medici, etc."

The first poem begins: "Qualor la turba de' canori Vati

Ne' fausti di pronta a cantar si vede
S'innalza, etc."

8. Cologna's remarks in the introduction to Luzzatto's 1829 translation (see p. 9, above) about the ancient translations, which were in fact Luzzatto's predecessors, are significant in this respect, as he treats them as a remote museum-piece. Indeed, he introduces a sample (of our text J) like this: "Non sarà forse sgradevole al curioso lettore di vederne qui rapportato uno squarcio:"
9. See p. 21, above.
10. However, a great variety of arrangement is commonly found in MSS of normal Hebrew Siddurim, even though they belong to the same rite. (See Bernheimer, Paleografia ebraica, cit., p. 301, n.2.)
11. This is treated with due scepticism by Cassuto. See Les traductions, cit., p.274. It is important to note too that, according to Jewish scribal tradition, the correction of a single error in a text justified the corrector in saying that he wrote it. (See Amram, op. cit., p.34.)
12. Carducci had stated that the poems interpolated in the Memoriali bolognesi were written down in order to pass the time away, and that they were written from memory. However, Debenedetti has shown that they were written down for a serious purpose (in order to prevent the interpolation of legally compromising material between the official statutes of the Bolognese Commune) and that the poems must have been copied from written sources. See S. Debenedetti, Osservazioni sulle poesie dei Memoriali Bolognesi, in GSLI, CXXV (1943) pp. 1-41. For another similar problem of the oral or written source for a work, in an Italian context, see A. Fagliaro, Poesia giullaresca e poesia popolare, Bari, 1953, p.195.

13. See p. 20 , above.
14. As defined, e.g., by P. Laas in Textual Criticism, Oxford, 1953, pp. 3ff., 7ff., 49.
15. See note 10.
16. See p. 4, above.
17. On the burning of Hebrew books in Italy see Amram, op. cit. pp. 266-70.
 The thoroughness which these seizures could assume is illustrated by the sad but picturesque account given by the Hebrew ^{writer} Jehuda di Lerma, of the fortunes of his Lehem Yehuda. He relates that as a result of the burnings of Hebrew books in 1553, he was unable to find a single one of the 1500 copies printed of his work. He was endeavouring to rewrite the book from memory when he came across a Christian who had saved a copy from the flames and he was therefore able to buy it from him. (Amram p. 267.)
18. For discussions about the importance of copying every detail from a written text and not relying on memory, see Jew. Enc., vol XI, p. 125.
19. I have left the texts as intact as possible (e.g. as far as word division is concerned) in order to make the comparison more accurate. This passage is part of the Shema in the morning service. (= Deut., XI, 13-20.)
20. ff. 9b - 10b.
21. ff. 23b - 24a.
22. See the facsimile on p. 112, above.

23. For a typical complaint of the tediousness of the scribe's task, see Amram, op. cit. p. 37. As far as remuneration is concerned: "Even to this day the vocation of the scribe is the worst-paid of all Jewish professions." (Jew. Enc. vol XI, p. 124.)
24. Les traductions... cit., pp. 263, 271.
25. For the distinction between these two styles of calligraphy see Bernheimer, Paleografia ebraica, cit., pp. 19-21.
26. Such was the elegance and uniformity of the Italian rabbinic script in the second half of the fifteenth century that it was used in some of the early printed books, particularly by Abraham Conat in Lantua between the years 1476 and 1480. The facsimiles given by Amram (p. 33) and Bernheimer (plate 3, and see p. 109) are strikingly similar to the hand of our manuscript C. This is quite different from the rabbinic type ('Rashi' type) frequently used in later printing.
27. Moreover I have not been able to compare the texts directly as one is in Parma and the other in the D.L. Minor features which could be of some help (such as colour of ink and spacing) are masked by comparing a microfilm (E) and a Xerox copy (C).
28. See the Table on p.145, above. Here there is no doubt at all that the two texts are closely related; but what we are endeavouring to establish is that the writer of both texts is the same person, in which case one would expect them to be almost identical.
29. See the facsimile on p.175 for a typical arrangement of this kind.
30. However there is more Hebrew used than in D and F. See e.g. the remarks on p.63, above.
31. Compare for instance the layout and punctuation of the titles in Plates V and VI, (p. 158).

32. See the facsimile on p. 167.
33. A typical example may be seen on line 7 of the facsimile on p. 114.
34. A further minor similarity in punctuation is the form of the soph
pasul (i.e. a full stop.) which in both C and E is written with two
vertical strokes, rather like inverted commas, instead of the clas-
sical sign which is like a large colon.
35. Compare, for instance, the decoration on f. 35a of C (p.160) with
that of f. 63a of E (p.161).
36. These measurements were taken before these texts were suspected
to be by the same scribe and in all probability the dimensions
(taking into account the variation in size of page within one text)
are really closer still.
37. See nos. 66 and 67 in the Table on p.145, above.
38. Spelling, punctuation and word division are mine; Hebrew words
are underlined.
39. See Cassuto, Les traductions..., cit. p. 271.
40. See below, p. 168.
41. p.145, above.
42. i.e. assuming the writing page was approximately the same size as
that of C, which is very probable.
43. See the passage quoted on p.154, above, where A has entennere while
B has scoltare, but otherwise the text is very close.

44. An improvised system of transcription would have to be based on normal Hebrew orthographic habits. Many features are very un-Hebraic in an apparently arbitrary manner. This can only be explained as a development away from Hebrew practice as a result of attempting to represent Italian in Hebrew characters in an unambiguous manner; this can be seen in the difficulties of rendering b and v and bb with beth (see p.112, above), with the consequent involvement of waw (which cannot be taken for b under any circumstances) which has its own ambiguities leading to the use of double waw. Hence the proliferation of signs for b and v. This kind of development indicates that texts of this kind were being copied over a fairly long period.
45. See above, p. 14.
46. See below, note 137.
47. See, for instance Ugolini's remarks on Salvioni's classification of the Pianto delle Marie, as marchegiano which he considers to be Abruzzese, in Testi volgeri abruzzesi del Duecento, Turin, 1959, p.117. Similar difficulties are experienced in attempting to localise Italian texts in Greek characters. (See Pagliaro, Saggi di critica seicentica, cit. p.310 n. 12)
48. See p.104, above.
49. i.e. apart from the highly sophisticated sign ῶ which is indeed to be found, but must be attributed in its rare occurrence to the influence of the Italian spellings ri, re.
50. This phenomenon has been thoroughly explored, and attempts have even been made at retranslation into Sicilian (by Fanvini). However, a more justifiable instance of the same text in both Tuscan and Sicilian form is presented by A. Monteverdi: Per una canzone di

Re Enzo in his Studi e saggi sulla letteratura italiana dei primi secoli, Milan-Naples, 1954, pp. 59-100 (= St. Rom., 1947, pp. 23-66, with additions).

51. Modernised spelling and punctuation.
52. Notice though that this text is very carefully written. See the Facsimile op. p. 175, below.
53. See C.D. Ginsburg, Introduction to the Massoretico-critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, London, 1897, pp. 462 ff.
54. See Bernheimer, Paleografia ebraica, cit., pp. 259-261.
55. However see the discussion of A below.
56. See the discussion of the two MSS of the Elegia, p.130, above.
57. See nos. 39, 42, 51, 55 in the Table on p. 145.
58. See nos. 43, 53, 54 in the Table.
59. See nos. 45, 57 in the Table.
60. i.e. in a text in Italian. Very careful orthographic canons were laid down for Hebrew especially for Bible codices. See Ginsburg, op. cit., pp. 454 ff.
61. Catalogue of Hebrew and Samaritan MSS. in B..., cit., volIII p. 217a.
62. The first pointer has inserted the vowels up to f. 100a, the second has continued from 101a (100b is blank) to 142b, leaving unpointed the rubrics and titles; the first pointer has completed the text from f. 143a to the end.

63. D also has a patch left unpointed on f. 17a.
64. Hence we find occasionally this curious letter ɳ i.e. waw altered to yodh (or vice versa).
65. This process did not necessarily take place during the copying of A, but may have already been present in the exemplar used to produce A.
66. Similarly we find ɳ for essi on f. 70b of E (a very careful text).
67. This occurs on line 9; but on line 11 we find the usual form sopre, and again on lines 12 and 13.
68. G. Rohlfs, Historische Grammatik der italienischen Sprache und ihrer Mundarten, Berne, 1949 - 1954, vol. ii pp. 162, 164 (although here it is a pronoun).
69. This makes senteiecaremo etc., which looks dangerously like a dialect trait, a > e.
70. See p.164above.
71. See p.103above.
72. See G. Bertoni, Profilo linguistico d'Italia, Modena, 1940, p. 67.
73. See above, p. 55.
74. See nos. 70, 71 in the Table on p. 145.
75. n before a labial is found in early texts of North, South and Central Italy (cf. Monaci-Arese, Crestomazia... cit., p. 597.)

76. For these features of Roman texts of the 13th to 15th centuries, see C. Merlo, Vicende storiche della lingua di Roma in ID, V (1929) pp. 172-201, (esp. pp. 186-199).
77. See F. D'Ovidio and A. Meyer-Lübke, Grammatica storica della lingua e dei dialetti italiani, (trad. E. Polcari) Milan, 1919, (2nd. Ed.), p. 192; G. Bertoni, Italia dialettale, Milan, 1916, p.165; G. Rohlfs, Historische Grammatik... cit., vol.I pp. 294-5, 297, 300, 304, 310. Meyer-Lübke, Merlo and Bertoni consider the phenomenon the result of development $pl > p^e l > pl$; but Rohlfs sees it as parallel with the conservation of consonant + l in French, Prov., Sardinian and Ladin. (See esp. Rohlfs, op. cit., pp. 294-6, for a discussion of these theories).
78. Rohlfs, op.cit., vol I, p. 314. See also E. Vuolo, La 's' davanti a consonante nel dialetto montesane in Studi in onore di A. Monteverdi, Modena, 1959, pp. 874 - 910 (esp. pp. 397 - 3).
Note also, e.g. the first line of the Aquilan text given by Battisti p. 117, (See note 30 below): "nna vota se facéa la fésta, mettemo, a ssan zistu..."
79. Here Battisti is quoting from and commenting on: L. Rossi-Casè, Il dialetto aquilano nella storia della sua fonetica in Boll. della Società di storia patria 'Anton Lodovico Muratori' negli Abruzzi, VI (1894) pp. 3-53, an article I have been unable to consult at first hand.
80. C. Battisti, Testi dialettali italiani in trascrizione fonetica, Parte II (Italia centrale e meridionale) p. 119, published as Beiheft 56 of Z. f. Ph. (Halle, 1912.)
81. See LLI, s.v. "approssimare."
82. See D'Ovidio and Meyer-Lübke, op. cit., p.196.
83. See map. 1635.

84. The vowels have here been simplified from those of the AIS.
85. There is no modern edition of this work. It is included in L.L. Muratori, Antiquitates Italicae ledii Aevi, Milan, 1742, vol.VI, pp. 707-848.
86. Ed. V. De Bartholomaeis, Rome, 1907.
87. For an account of the extant ancient Abruzzese texts, see P.L. Ugoni, Testi volgari abruzzesi, cit., p.1, n.1.
88. Note the awareness of the Tuscan literary tradition in the Cantari sulla guerra aquilana di Preccio di anonimo contemporaneo, ed. P. Valentini, Rome, 1935, pp. 5-6:

"Aristotile et Virgilio né 'l Boccaccio
 Non so, Sibilla né so Salomone,
 Dante e 'l Petracche sciollie onne laccio,
 Né re Roberto né Cicco non sone;" (St.4)

and he is aware of Tuscan as a literary ideal to which he cannot aspire:

"Non so l'francioso et né so toscanu
 Che de rimare solu me renterna;
 Ia veramente allu modo aquilanu
 Io rimarò, con lingua materna
 Perlendo grosso, en rima senestru,
 Ferduname: solu Deo me i'o magestru." (St. 5)

89. See n. 85, above.
90. Valentini's remarks on the language of the Cantari apply to a greater or lesser degree to all these Abruzzese chronicles of the 14th and 15th centuries.:

"La lingua ci appare come una vera miscela, nella quale il
 sôstrato del materno dialetto si presenta tutto permeato della

toscanità..." (p. XXIX. See n.33, above)

91. See n. 33, above.
92. See Ugolini, op. cit. pp. 32, 46.
93. See n. 36, above.
94. The examples here are quoted from Il teatro abruzzese del "medio Evo raccolto da V. De Bartholomaeis, pubblicato con la collaborazione del dott. L. Rivera, Bologna, [1924].
95. "al tempo di Giovanna II, era in atto la completa parificazione fra gli ebrei e gli altri cittadini", A. Milano, Storia degli ebrei, cit., p. 133.
96. ibid. pp. 190-192.
97. ibid. p. 193.
98. See G. Fiorentino, Note lessicali al Magré Dardegé, cit., p. 147. Note also simonire (p. 152) and anešane (p. 155).
99. G. Vidossi, L'Italia dialettale fino a Dante in Le origini, ed. A. Viscardi et al., Milan - Naples, 1956, pp. XXXIII - LXXI.
100. The origin of this form has been explained in many ways, e.g. G. Fiorentino (The General Problems..., cit., p. 74) suggests it is a corruption of domeneddio benedetto. But this does not explain the unique use of taw in this word; if the final consonant came from -tto it would normally be spelt with a teth. (Moreover taw was normally pronounced d not t.) Cassuto's suggestion, which Fiorentino rejects, that this is an intentional deformation is much more feasible. However, Cassuto constantly transcribes it Domeddeo, apparently considering it a kethibh form, i.e. written one way, but pronounced another. But it is

improbable that the holy name was ever intended to be pronounced in full. Even if this was so at an earlier stage, the word must sooner or later have been pronounced Domedded, for B writes the last letter with a daleth. This points to the factor which has been overlooked in the extensive discussion which this word has provoked: that it is not really "domedeth" we are concerned with, but a word always found in Hebrew characters. For this ending is not the only peculiarity; the whole spelling is unusual, especially one or both of the last two syllables which lack the mater lectionis for the vowel e (see no. 79 in the Table). Moreover, D points it domadeth. An important factor in attempting to avoid normal spelling of domeddeo is that this would involve using yodh and waw, two letters of the tetragrammaton whose combination is regularly avoided in Hebrew numerals and also in some Yiddish spellings (see J. A. Joffe, Dating the Origin of Yiddish dialects in The Field of Yiddish, ed. U. Weinreich, New York, 1954, p. 108); and this combination of yodh and waw (-eo, -io) would be particularly inappropriate in this word. A further consideration is that, taking into account the character of the language in which this word occurs (more inclined to epenthesis than syncope), we would expect domeneddeth rather than domeddeth. If we consider this word to be not only a deformation, but also an abbreviation, originally written without pointing, then all the factors mentioned can be accounted for. Such abbreviations were common in mediaeval Hebrew practice, e.g. Rambam = Rabbi Moše ben Maⁱmon, etc. (This accounts for the absence of matres lectionis.) The final taw derives from an accidental combination of two letters, resh and nun, standing for re nostro (Heb. 'calque' malkenu) used to dissociate the Jewish from the Christian divinity. (This explains the unique use of taw, for any letter would have served as a deformation.) Thus the expression envisaged must have been dome(ne)ddeo re nostro, written the equivalent of dom.d.r.n, i.e. םדדרנ, eventually read as םדדרנ (i.e. the last two letters read as taw). When the text was pointed, the vowels had to be accommodated to this unique combination of consonants; hence C and E insert the unusual seghol in the two last syllables, and D has a pathach in the second.

101. The only differences in the consonants of these two pages are the aleph of ašeliēsti and anoi. A further difference in the pointing, not transcribed here, is the methech used in most words (on the principles explained in cap. IV, above, p. 110) by the first naqdan.
102. Quoted in full in Cassuto, Les traductions du Rituel...cit., p. 269.
103. H, however, was not simply derived from G, but partly from a MS. such as those discussed above.
104. Gherson Soncino probably had little contact with living Tuscan. He was born in Lombardy and worked in the Romagna and the Marche. See F. Soave, Dei Soncino..., cit., passim.
105. See the lists in: F. Soave, Dei Soncino...cit., pp. 39-49.
106. On linguistic standards in the ^{XVI cent.} 1500 see: Migliorini, Storia..., cit. p. 332.
- 106a *ibid.*, p. 257.
107. See S. Brook, The Language of the Book of Common Prayer, London, 1965, p. 211.
108. Punctuation, gemination of consonants and division of words are mine.
109. This is a sample: "E sera se enteneno entenereti ali comanamenti mei che io comano avoi ojo [i.e. oje = oggi] amare domedeth deth vostro e aservire eso in tuto lo core vostro e entuto lo animo vostro e darajo..." There are some signs of modernisation here, however, in the vowels (which are very erratic and full of errors, probably in part attributable to the type-setter) and typographers' nonchalance about accents in texts in Latin characters, mentioned in Migliorini, Note sulla grafia... cit., p. 223, n.6.

110. See p.19, above.

111. Everything indicates that pointing was a late addition to the text of the Elegy (if Cassuto's chronological calculations are correct, there must be a gap of at least a century between the composition of the poem and the writing of the two extant manuscripts). On line 14, Cassuto's text reads: "de sicerdoti e liviti avantati". The unlikely sicerdote derives from F where the i in the first syllable seems assured because it is supported by the mater lectionis, yodh. Nonetheless, this seems to me simply a scribal error. The strokes of the letters, as can be seen from the hand-used in F are very uniform and the letters closely bunched together, often touching, so that it is easy to misread the stroke of one letter as part of another. This is particularly so with the Italian rabbinic zade. The first stroke of the letter is identical with the single small stroke which comprises the yodh. Assuming the word was originally sacerdote, it would have been written approximately — 7'30 which could easily have been misread then, as — 7'3'0. The pointer could only point this as i or e and hence the present reading of F. This conjecture is confirmed by the reading of F (generally the more correct of the two, but unpointed) which has no yodh in the first syllable (i.e. "sacerdote"). The puzzling line 41 can plausibly be emended on similar lines. It is erroneous in both manuscripts and has been emended by Cassuto with the conjecture "tutti çença bandire per quanto", Continj rejects this and remains closer to F with "tutti çença non dère per quanto", but he adds "non sembra pleonastico dopo çença", and, as Cassuto points out, non would be the only instance in the text, which otherwise has no. A very plausible reading would be "tutti çença ben dère per quanto", explicable on the lines mentioned above (7'3 read as 7'12). The ben would be emphatic as in line 65 and give a meaning: "without bothering at all to argue about the price."

112. Un'antichissima elegia..., cit., p. 382.
113. This text is now considered by Ugolini to be Abruzzese in origin; but the copy examined by Salvioni (on which Cassuto based his classification) is mainly Marchegiano in character. See Ugolini, Testi volgari abruzzesi..., cit., p. 117. Was the author of the Elegia necessarily acquainted with such works only through oral transmission, as suggested by Cassuto? The idea of Jews standing in the market square to listen to a recitation of the Pianto delle Marie, for instance, seems somewhat improbable, considering the subject-matter. The certain knowledge that Jews (probably money-lenders) at one time possessed an illustrated Italian Bible suggests a possible avenue for the influence of written texts of this kind. See G. Folena and G. L. Mellini, Bibbia istoriata padovana della fine del Trecento, Venice, 1962, pp. XI-XIII.
114. A witness in a court case of 1666, referring to scenery stolen when the actors in a giudiata were arrested for indecency, describes it as representing "la scola del ghetto et è tutta con colori gialli e rossi...", and another says "il tempio dell'Hebrei, dico meglio la scola dell'Hebrei." (See E. Re, Qualche nota sul tipo dell'ebreo nel teatro popolare italiano in GSLI, LX (1912) pp. 397-8.)
115. Lines 76-7: "De secerdoti io foi figliola, signuri de lie ('legge') e dde scola."
116. Cassuto quotes some examples (p. 408). It is frequently used in the Abruzzesi texts mentioned above. The fact that attapinarsi

"nel giudeo-fiorentino vive ancora" is no evidence of the specifically Jewish use of taupino (which is rather remote in form, in any case) as it can be found also in P. Petrocchi, Novo dizionario universale della lingua italiana, Milan, 1887, vol. I, p. 167 (above the line, i.e. not obsolete).

117. La Sacra Bibbia, tradotta...da G. Diodati, Geneva, 1641; La Bibbia tradotta dai testi originali...da G. Luzzi, Florence, 1921.
118. D. S. Blondheim, Travaux sur le judéo-italien. U. Cassuto, cit.; Blondheim takes (graphic) features of F (= our O), such as garanti and granti as Judaeo-Italian peculiarities and wants more of them.
119. Contini's emendations tend to eliminate anomalies and do not change at all the character of the language. Indeed they move in the opposite direction to Blondheim's 'peculiarising' tendencies. (See Poeti del Duecento, 1960, vol. II, pp. 796-7 (Nota ai testi')). Moreover, the mistakes in the Ferrara MS. show that it is a copy of a text not completely understood by the copyist. Hence the original probably had a less idiosyncratic vowel structure (not more so, as implied by Blondheim) than that indicated in this MS.
120. Spitzer, Le bellezze artistiche..., cit., p. 789.
- 120a. The examples are taken from Monaci-Arese, op. cit., passim and see p. 596.
121. See Table on p. 145.
122. See p. 137, above.
123. However, in the Siddurim, the Heb. pronominal suffix of the type devarènu plays a major part in determining the word order.

124. See Jew.Enc., vol. XII, p. 446.
125. Poeti del Duecento, cit., I, p. 41.
126. In this connection Contini, better than anyone, has divined the nature of the text (although very cautious in suggesting emendations) by being suspicious of the alternation of i and e, u and o, etc. (ibid., II, p. 796)
127. See pp. 29, 147, above.
128. Una trascrizione..., cit., p. 23.
129. GSLI, LXVI (1915) pp. 122-7.
130. op. cit., p. 39.
131. ibid., p. 23, n. 4.
132. ibid., p. 31, n. 22.
133. This transformation probably took place in more than one stage. Several possibilities as to how the second and third letters of the word (daleth and waw) were misread (hence becoming waw and nun) could be made here, taking into account the type of hand which may have been used, especially if the original were in cursive script. But this is of secondary importance.
134. Here, of course, I am not considering as errors such features as aman[n]o for Dante's amando, etc. However, there are words like vera, penetenza, fa, la, odierno, incorrectly pointed veraa, penetenzaa, paa (i.e. with daghesh), laa, odeerno. Strangely,

Sermoneta transcribes these vera, penetenza, etc., but faa, without any explanation. Moreover, he attempts to explain the scribe's aberrations as a system, which includes a special sign, τ to indicate "una sillaba muta". This is quite impossible.

135. e.g. he says v is always rendered by l. (He gives as one example " וְלִי = Bolere = Volere.") But the word vera is written with a waw!
136. Vita di Cola di Rienzo di anonimo romano, ed. F. Cusin, Florence, 1943. The examples which follow are all taken from pp. 12-15.
137. Unpublished, as far as I know. However, J. Elbogen gave an account of this work based on two copies in Parma (without knowing of the B. M. copy) in Ein hebräisch-italienisches Glossar philosophischer Ausdrücke in Festschrift... A. Berliner, Frankfurt, 1903, pp. 65-75. In three columns he gives the Heb. term, the It. gloss (in Heb. characters) and his transcription of the latter. His transcriptions are somewhat 'Italianising' in 19th century fashion, (whereas Sermoneta's tend to be 'dialectalising'). Hence features such as retolica (all three MSS), retondo (ri- ? — the MSS are unpointed), arismetica are transcribed rotondo, retorica, aritmetica, and conç[o]sia consa as conciossaché, etc. There are many features of interest in these three MSS which would repay further examination, but the significant^{point} here is that in this fairly extensive glossary (about 220 expressions) the language does not show the Romanised phonology of the Dante extracts.
138. See note 134, above.
139. See cap. I, above, passim.
140. But note, for instance, that Jacopone da Todi too "non ha il

minimo scrupolo nel munire parole usuali di suffissi che gli servano a ottenere una rima". (Migliorini, Storia..., cit., p. 146)

141. G. Bertoni, Profilo^{storico} del dialetto di Modena, Florence, 1925, s.v.

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